Eastern District of Virginia
Electronic Case Filing
Policies and Procedures Manual

Chapter Seven:
Filing Procedures

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Filing Procedures – Civil Documents

Overview

This section outlines the process and procedures to use when filing civil documents.

Filing a Civil Complaint, Petition, or Notice of Removal

Complaints, petitions, and notices of removal are not currently accepted electronically and must be filed by sending them through the U.S. mail or delivering them in person to the clerk's office, along with the filing fee, which may be paid by check, money order, or credit card. Complaints, petitions, and notices of removal will then be scanned, electronically filed, and docketed by clerk's office staff.

Civil Documents That May Be Filed Electronically

Following is a list of categories of civil documents that may be filed electronically:

- Answers to Complaints,
- Other Answers,
- Motions,
- Responses and Replies,
- Discovery Documents,
- Notices,
- Trial Documents,
- Appeal Documents, and
- Other Documents

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Filing a Civil Document Electronically: Overview

Below is an overview of the process for filing a civil document electronically:

Stage	Description
1	Login to ECF. Select *Civil* from the blue menu bar at the top of the screen.
2	Click on the name of the type of document you are filing (e.g., motion, answer, etc.).
3	Select the specific document you are filing (e.g., motion to dismiss).
4	Enter the case number in which the document is to be filed.
5	Select the party or parties for whom the document is being filed.
6	Select the PDF document to be filed.
7	Add attachments, if any, to the document being filed.
8	Modify docket text as necessary.
9	Submit the document to ECF.
10	Retain Notification of Electronic Filing (NEF).
11	Mail a paper copy of the document to any non-filing user, along with a paper copy of the NEF.

Filing a Motion in a Civil Case: Introduction

To give you a sense of how the ECF process and its screens work, the material below describes the steps for filing a civil motion. These steps are similar to those for filing other documents in ECF.

Note: If following these steps is difficult for you, you may wish to consider taking a live class, in which you will receive hands-on practice.

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Filing a Motion in a Civil Case: Selecting *Civil* from the Menu

Step 1 – Login to the system. Then, select *Civil* from the blue menu bar at the top of the screen.

Filing a Motion in a Civil Case: Selecting *Motions* from the Menu

Step 2 – Select *Motions* as the type of document to file.

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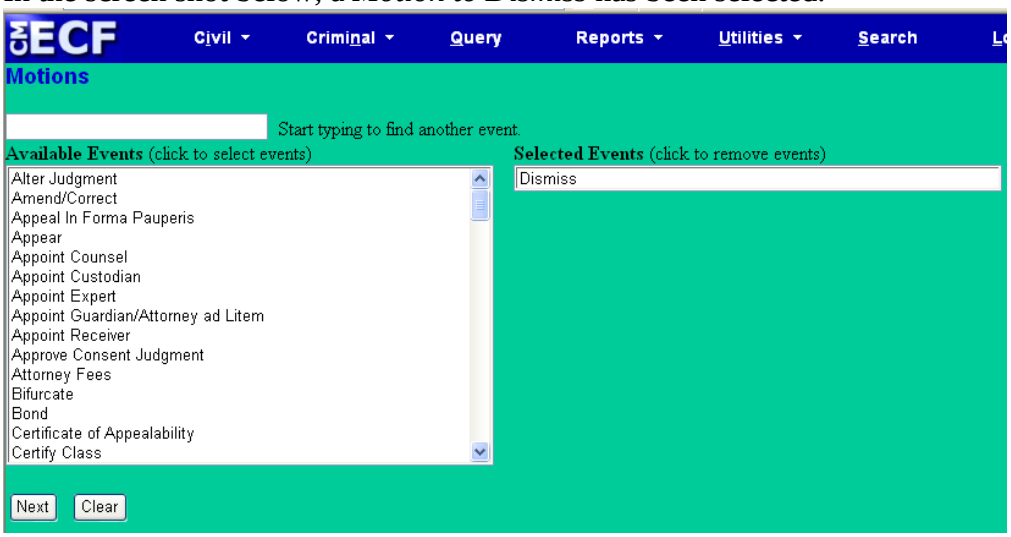
Filing a Motion in a Civil Case: Selecting the Type of Motion

Step 3 – Select the type of motion that you are filing by either beginning to type the name of the motion in the white box at the top of the screen and then clicking on its name in the dropdown list or by scrolling in the dropdown list and then clicking on its name in the dropdown list and then click on *Next*.

The name of the motion will appear in the *Selected Events* white box to the right of the dropdown list.

In the screen shot below, a *Motion to Dismiss* has been selected.



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Filing a Motion in a Civil Case: Entering the Case Number

Step 4a – Enter the case number in which the document is to be filed.

The case number format is as follows: *division: year-type-number* (e.g., *1:06-cv-690*), although you must type only a year and number when first prompted for a case number.

The division number denotes the division in which the case is pending, as follows:

- Alexandria is 1,
- Norfolk is 2,
- Richmond is 3, and
- Newport News is 4.

The codes for the two civil case types are *cv* for civil cases and *mc* for miscellaneous civil cases.

Note: ECF defaults to the number for the last case in which you worked. Ensure that the proper case number is entered to avoid filing your document in the wrong case.

If the case number was:

- Entered incorrectly, click on the *Clear* button to re-enter.
- Rejected by the computer as an invalid case number, click on the *Back* button on your browser menu bar to re-enter the number.

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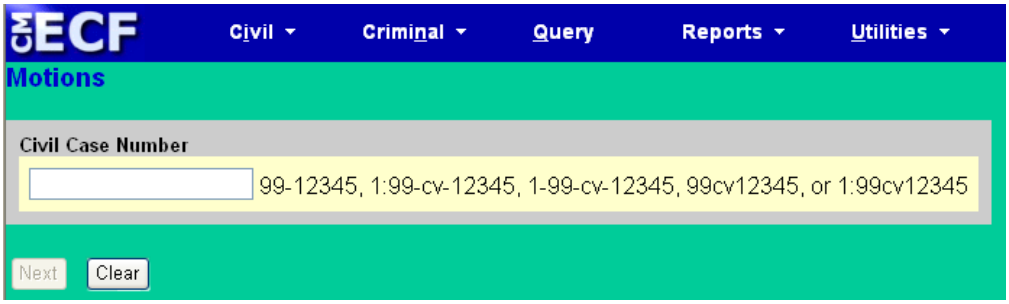
Filing a Motion in a Civil Case: Entering the Case Number – Screen Shot

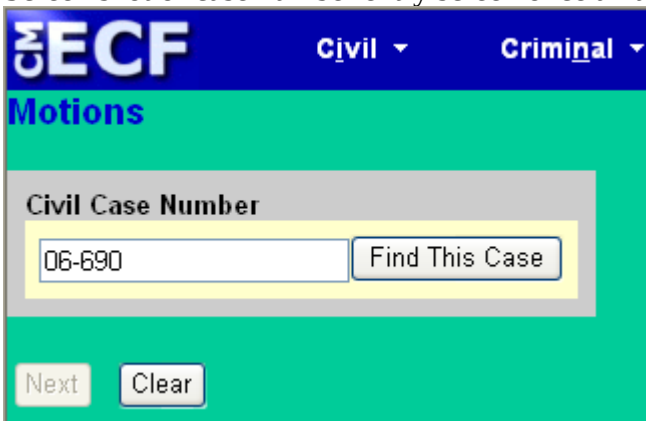
Screen shot of the case number entry screen.



Note: If you submit a case number that is formatted incorrectly, ECF will give an error message advising you of the correct format for entering the case number. Take the following steps:

- Click *OK* to acknowledge and close the error message.
- Click the *Clear* button on the screen and re-enter the case number in the correct format.
- Click on the *Next* button.

Screen shot of case number entry screen once a number has been entered.



Click on the *Find This Case* button to search for your case.

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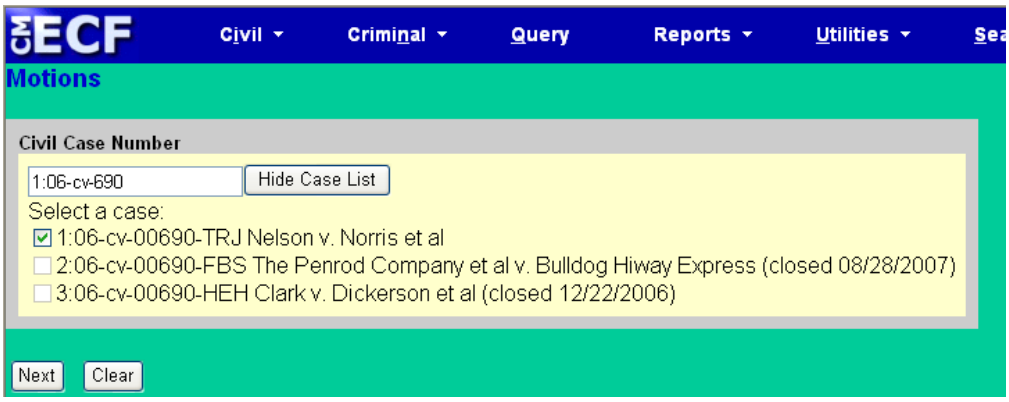
Filing a Motion in a Civil Case: Selecting the Case

Step 4b – Select the correct case, if a list is provided.

If ECF finds more than one civil or miscellaneous case with the same number, it will list the cases, including the case number and short title of the case, which will allow you to select the correct case.

The screen shot below shows that two civil cases numbered 06-690 exist in the system: one is in Alexandria, one in Norfolk, and the other is in Richmond. The correct case has been selected by clicking in the box next to that case.

Once you have selected the correct case, click on the *Next* button.



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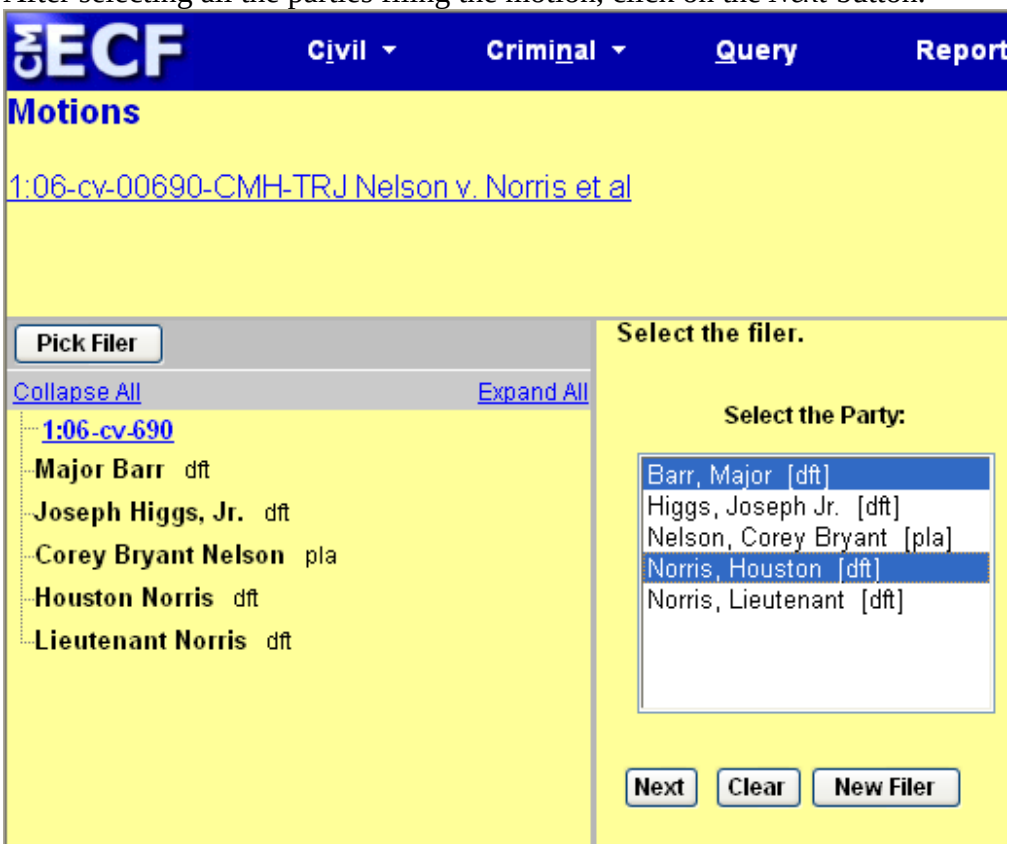
Filing a Motion in a Civil Case: Selecting the Parties

Step 5a – Select the party or parties filing the motion by clicking on the party name(s). The list of party names is presented on the screen in alphabetical order.

- If you represent more than one defendant or plaintiff, you may select all the parties you represent by holding down the *CTRL* key while clicking on the name of each party.
- When filing a joint document, select all pertinent parties as filers.

Note: To deselect a party, hold down the *CTRL* key while clicking on the party(ies) you wish to deselect.

After selecting all the parties filing the motion, click on the *Next* button.



Note: If your party does not appear on the list, see the section of this manual titled "Adding/Creating a New Party."

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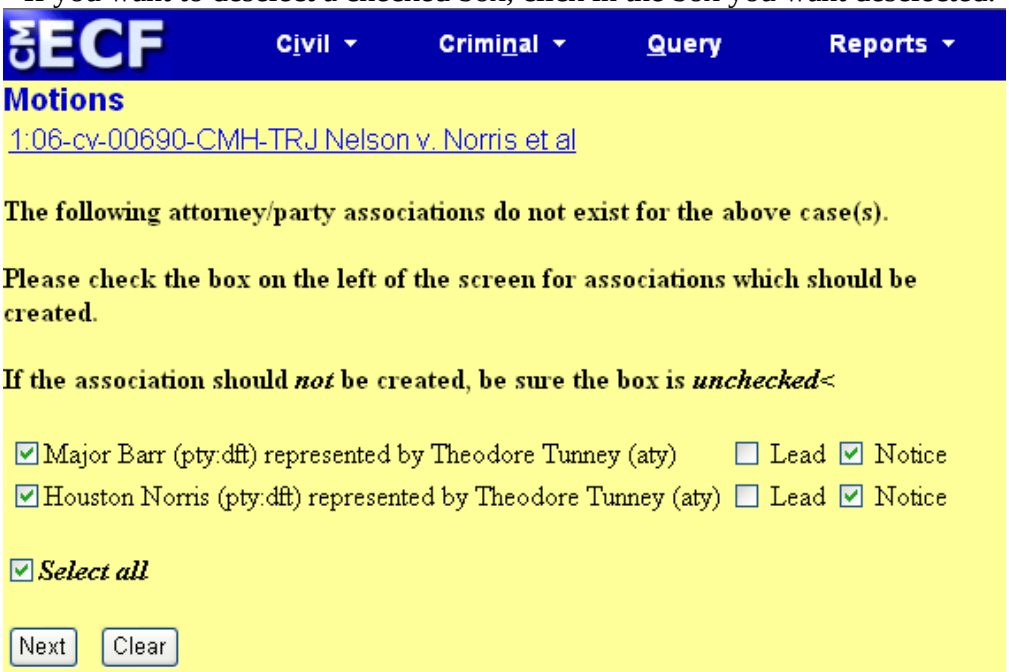
Filing a Motion in a Civil Case: First Appearance of an Attorney

Step 5b – Create an association between you and the party, if necessary.

If this document is your first appearance in the case on behalf of the party, you will see the screen depicted in the screen shot below. Then, take the following steps:

- Click the box next to the party name to select the party or parties you represent AND deselect *Select all* if you do not represent all the parties listed.
- Click the box next to the word *Lead* if you are lead counsel for the party, and click the box next to the word *Notice*, if it is not already checked, to receive notices from the Court and other attorneys.
- If you want to deselect a checked box, click in the box you want deselected.



Note: Make sure the system does not create an association between you and a party you do NOT represent, such as in a situation when you are filing a joint document.

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Filing a Motion in a Civil Case: Selecting the PDF File Name and Location

Step 6 – Select the PDF file name and location for the document you are filing by doing the following:

- Click on the *Browse* button to navigate to the appropriate directory and file.
- Select the document. Its name should appear in the *Filename* box.
- Verify that you have attached the correct document by viewing it.
- Click on *Next*.

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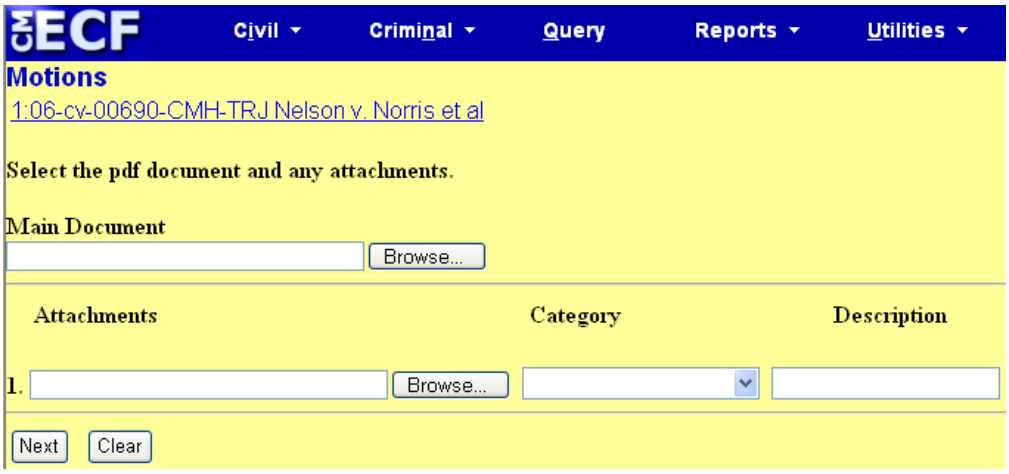
Filing a Motion in a Civil Case: Selecting the PDF File Name and Location -- Screen Shot and Notes

Below is a shot of the screen that asks you to select the PDF file name and location, with accompanying notes:



Notes:

- The file selected **MUST** be in PDF format with a .pdf suffix. If the file is not in PDF format, the system will not be able to read the file.
- If you do not attach a document, the following prompt will occur:

- Click on the *OK* button and then click on the *Browse* button.
- If you need additional assistance with the PDF process, you may wish to view the computer-based training module, "Filing a Civil Motion."

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Filing a Motion in a Civil Case: Verifying That You Have Attached the Correct Document

Step 7 – Verify that you have attached the correct document by taking the following steps:

- Right click on the highlighted file name to open a quick menu.
- Left click on *open*. The PDF document will be opened by Adobe Acrobat or Acrobat Reader so that you can view the document and verify that it is the correct one.
- Close Adobe Acrobat or Acrobat Reader.
- Click the *open* button on the file upload screen.

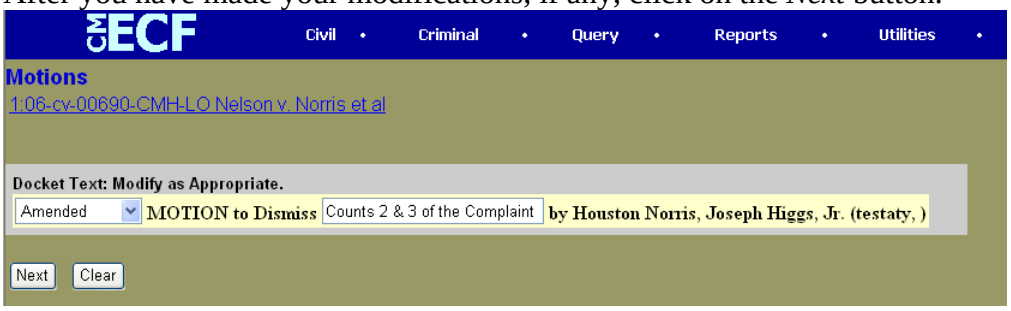
Filing a Motion in Civil Case: Modifying the Docket Entry

Step 8 – Modify the docket entry, if appropriate.

You can modify the docket entry in two ways:

- By selecting a modifier to go before the word *motion* from the dropdown list by clicking on the arrow and
- By typing more information about the motion in the white box following the word M*otion*. In general, white boxes in docket entries allow you to add additional text to the entries.

After you have made your modifications, if any, click on the *Next* button.



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Filing a Motion in a Civil Case: Reviewing the Docket Entry for Accuracy

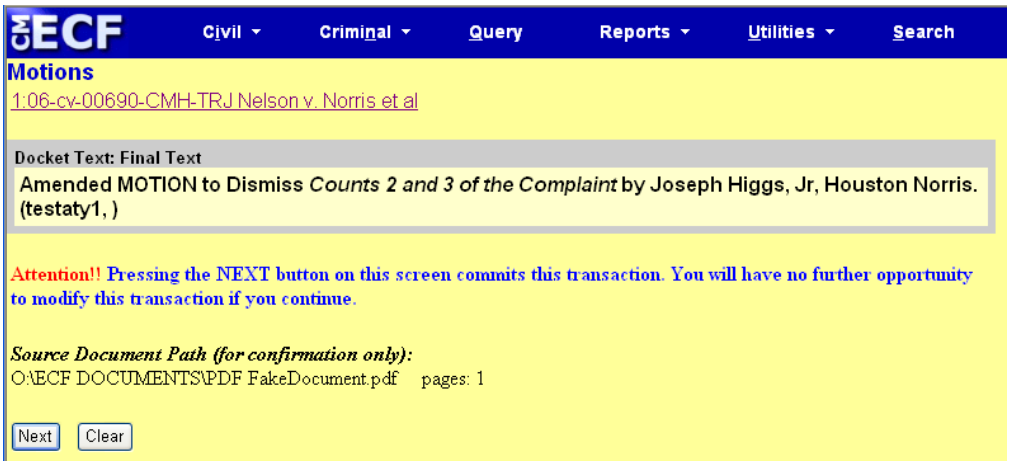
Step 9 – Review your docket entry for accuracy.

If the docket entry is…	Then…
Correct	Click on the *Next* button to commit the transaction. ***Note***: Once you click on the *Next* button, only clerk's office staff will be able to make any changes to the submission.
Incorrect	Click on *Civil* on the main blue menu bar to abort the entry and start over.

Note: Once you have committed the transaction, the next screen that appears is the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF), your official filing receipt. To ensure that your transaction is complete, wait for the NEF before clicking on any other function.

The screen shot below shows that "Amended" was selected from the dropdown list and "Counts 2 and 3 of the Complaint" was typed into the white box, so that the final docket text now reads, "Amended Motion to Dismiss Counts 2 and 3 of the Complaint."

This docket text is correct, so the next step would be to click on the *Next* button to commit the transaction.



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Filing a Motion in a Civil Case: Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF)

ECF electronically transmits the NEF to the attorneys in the case who have supplied their e-mail addresses to the Court. Your transaction is complete once you have received the NEF, and the NEF is your proof of filing with the Court. Therefore, you should save either an electronic or a paper copy of the NEF.

To save a copy of the NEF either as an electronic record or as a paper document, see the chart below:

If you want to…	Then…
Save an electronic copy of the NEF	• Select *File* on your browser's menu bar. • Select *Save Frame As*… from the drop-down window and complete the rest of the steps.
Print a copy of the NEF	Select *Print* on your browser's toolbar.

Note: The NEF also displays the names and addresses of individuals who will not be electronically notified of the filing. It is the filing user's responsibility to serve paper copies of the document and of the NEF to attorneys and parties who are not receiving electronic notification.

Filing Procedures – Criminal Documents

Overview

This section outlines the procedures to use when filing criminal documents.

Filing a Criminal Indictment, Information, or Complaint

Indictments, superseding indictments, informations, and complaints are not currently accepted electronically and must be filed by sending them through the U.S. mail or by delivering them in person to the clerk's office.

Criminal Documents That May Be Filed Electronically

Following is a list of categories of criminal documents that may be filed electronically:

- Plea-Related Documents,
- Motions,
- Responses and Replies,
- Discovery Documents,
- Waivers,
- Notices,
- Trial Documents,
- Appeal Documents, and
- Other Documents.

Continued on next page

Filing a Criminal Document Electronically: Overview

Below is an overview of the process for filing a criminal document electronically:

Stage	Description
1	Login to ECF. Select *Criminal* from the blue menu bar at the top of the screen.
2	Click on the name of the type of document you are filing (e.g., motion, responses, etc.).
3	Enter the case number in which the document is to be filed.
4	Select either *All defendants* or the defendant(s) you represent, if there is more than one defendant in the case.
5	Select the party or parties for whom the document is being filed.
6	Select the specific document you are filing (e.g., motion to dismiss).
7	Select the PDF document to be filed.
8	Add attachments, if any, to the document being filed.
9	Modify docket text as necessary.
10	Submit the document to ECF.
11	Retain Notification of Electronic Filing (NEF).
12	Mail paper copies of the document and of the NEF to any non-filing user.

Filing a Criminal Motion: Introduction

To give you a sense of how the ECF process and its screens work, the material below describes the steps for filing a criminal motion. These steps are similar to those for filing other documents in ECF.

Note: If following these steps is difficult for you, you may wish to consider taking a live class, in which you will receive hands-on practice.

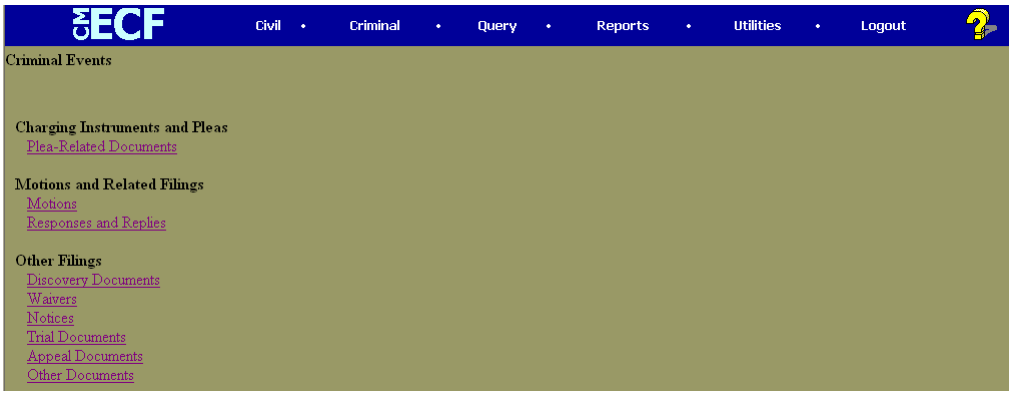
Continued on next page

Filing a Criminal Motion: Selecting *Criminal* from the Menu

Step 1 – Login to the system. Then, select *Criminal* from the blue menu bar at the top of the screen.

Filing a Criminal Motion: Selecting *Motions* from the Menu

Step 2 – Select *Motions* as the type of document to file.



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Filing a Motion in a Criminal Case: Entering the Case Number

Step 3a – Enter the case number in which the document is to be filed.

The case number format is as follows: *division: year-type-number* (e.g., *1*:*06-cr-525*), although you must type only a year and number when first prompted for a case number. The screen shot in the next block shows the case number entry screen and its examples of case number formats acceptable to the system.

The division number denotes the division in which the case is pending, as follows:

- Alexandria is 1,
- Norfolk is 2,
- Richmond is 3, and
- Newport News is 4.

The codes for the three criminal case types are *cr* for criminal felony cases, *mj* for criminal misdemeanor cases, and *po* for criminal petty offense cases.

Note: ECF defaults to the number for the last case in which you worked. Ensure that the proper case number is entered to avoid filing your document in the wrong case.

If the case number was:
- Entered incorrectly, click on the *Clear* button to re-enter.
- Rejected by the computer as an invalid case number, click on the *Back* button on your browser menu bar to re-enter.

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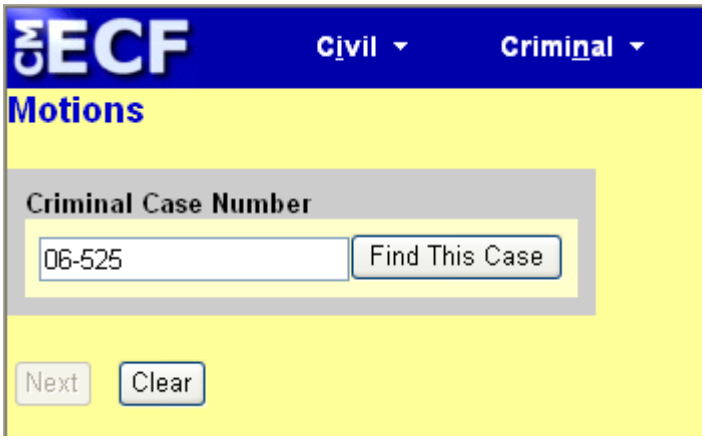
Filing a Motion in a Criminal Case: Entering the Case Number – Screen Shot

Screen shot of the case number entry screen.



Note: Once you type in the case number, the button *Find This Case* appears. Click on the *Find This Case* button to continue.

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Filing a Motion in a Criminal Case: Selecting the Case

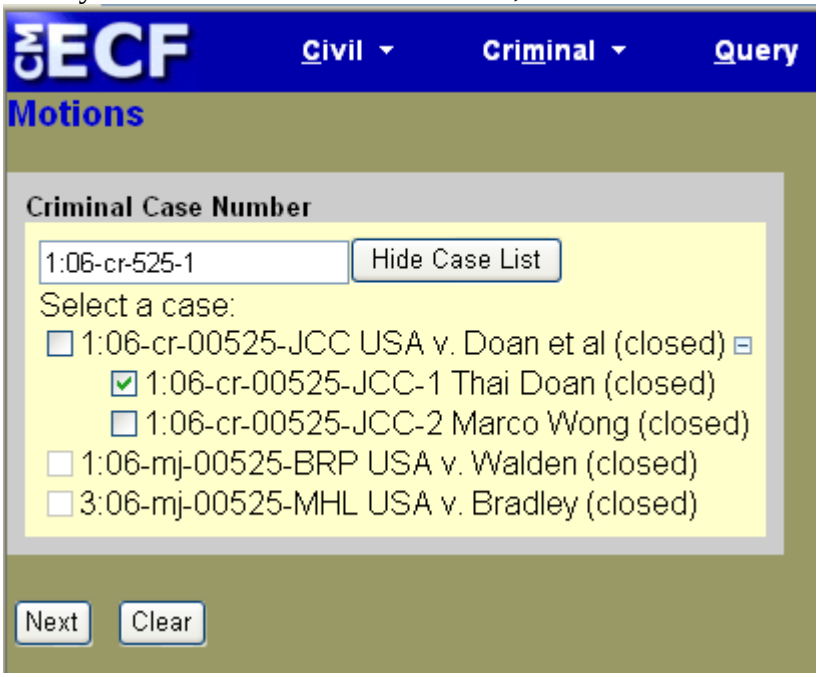
Step 3b – Select the correct case, if a list is provided.

If ECF finds more than one criminal case with the same number, it will list the cases, including the case number and short title of the case, which will allow you to select the correct case.

The screen shot below shows that three criminal cases numbered 06-525 exist in the system. Two of the cases are in Alexandria: one is a *cr* multi-defendant case, and the other is an *mj* case. The third case is in Richmond.

A criminal case may contain more than one defendant. Each defendant has an individual docket sheet within the case docket sheet. When filing a document for a defendant, be sure to select the correct defendant, defendants, or entire case by clicking the appropriate check box.

Once you have selected the correct case, click on the *Next* button.



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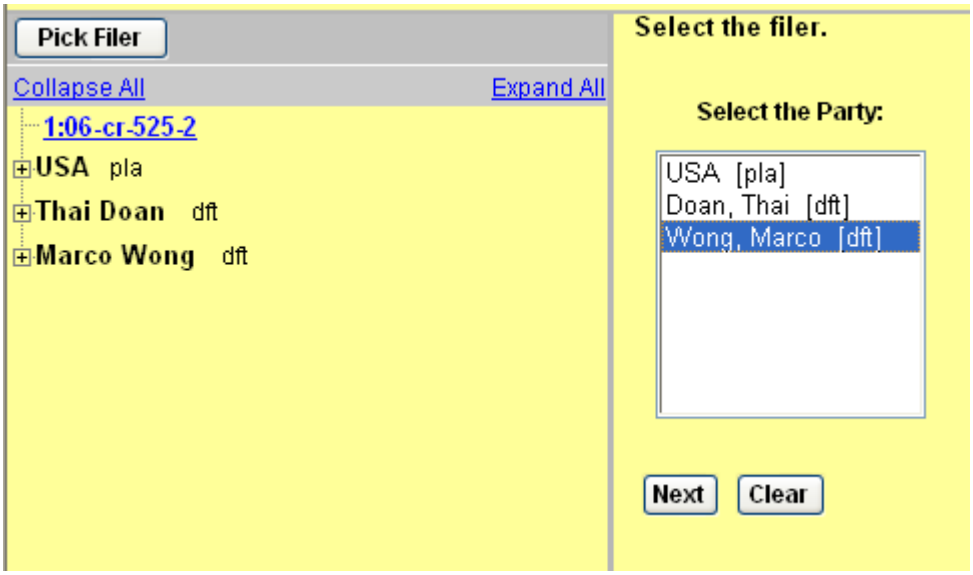
Filing a Motion in a Criminal Case: Selecting the Parties

Step 4a – Select the party or parties filing the motion by clicking on the party name(s) in the white box on the right of the screen. The list of party names is presented on the screen in alphabetical order.

- If you represent more than one defendant, you may select all the defendants you represent by holding down the *CTRL* key while clicking on the name of each defendant.
- When filing a joint document, select all pertinent parties as filers.

Note: To deselect a party, hold down the *CTRL* key while clicking on the party(ies) you wish to deselect.

After selecting all the parties filing the motion, click on the *Next* button.



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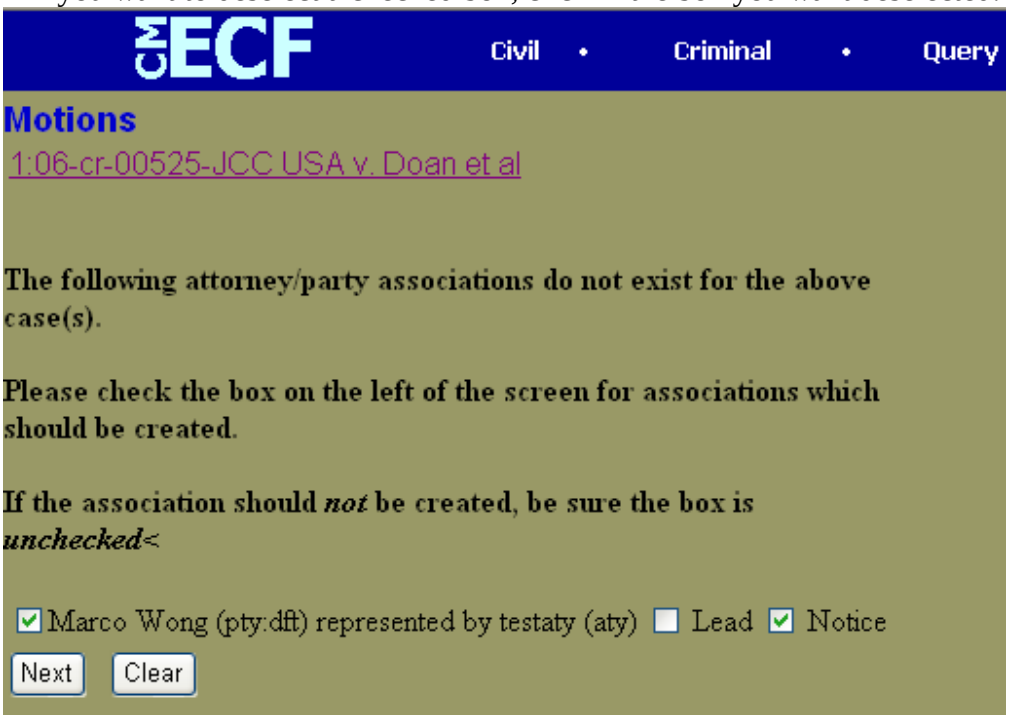
Filing a Motion in a Criminal Case: First Appearance of an Attorney

Step 4b – Create an association between you and the party, if necessary.

If this document is your first appearance in the case on behalf of the party, you will see the screen depicted in the screen shot below.

- Click the box next to the party name to select the party or parties you represent AND deselect *Select all* if you do not represent all the parties listed.
  Note: In this example, only one party is filing the motion. Therefore, in the screen shot below, the system has not provided a *Select all* button.
- Click the box next to the word *Lead* if you are lead counsel for the party, and click the box next to the word *Notice*, if it is not already checked, to receive notices from the Court and other attorneys.
- If you want to deselect a checked box, click in the box you want deselected.



Note: Make sure the system does not create an association between you and a party you do NOT represent, such as in a situation when you are filing a joint document.

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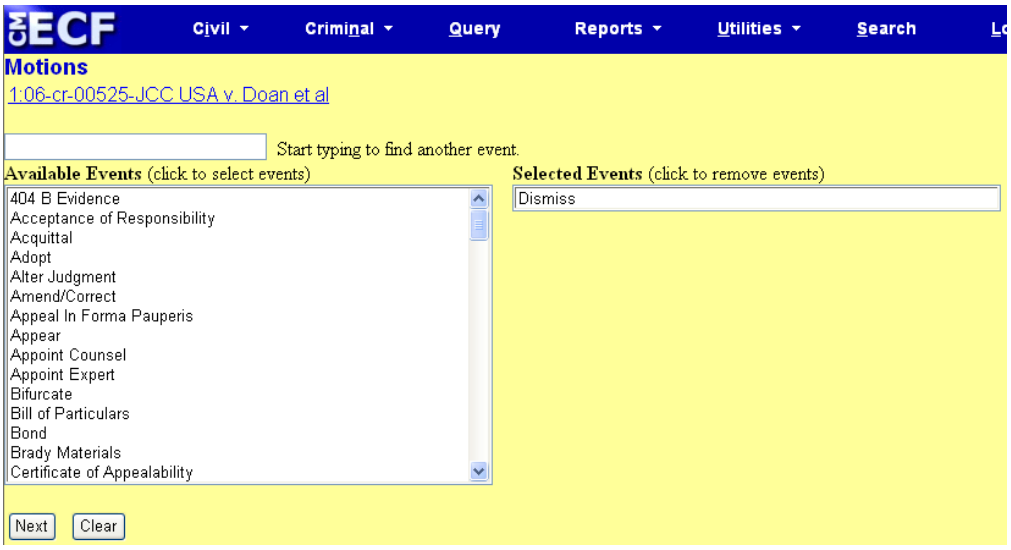
Filing a Motion in a Criminal Case: Selecting the Type of Motion

Step 5 – Select the type of motion that you are filing by clicking on its name from the dropdown list and then click on the *Next* button.

In the screen shot below, a *Motion to Dismiss* has been selected.



Filing a Motion in a Criminal Case: Selecting the PDF File Name and Location

Step 6 – Select the PDF file name and location for the document you are filing by doing the following:

- Click on the *Browse* button to navigate to the appropriate directory and file.
- Select the document. Its name should appear in the *Filename* box.
- Verify that you have attached the correct document by viewing it.
- Click on *Next*.

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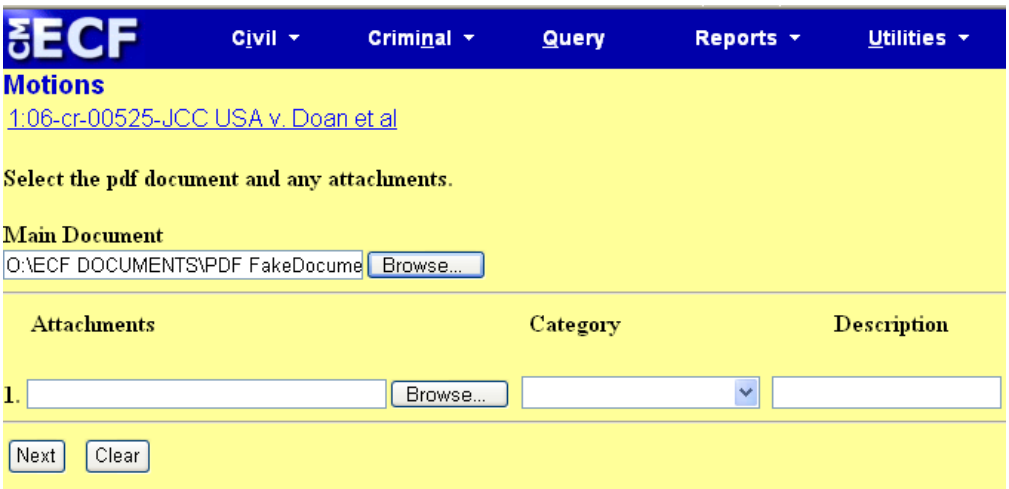
Filing a Motion in a Criminal Case: Selecting the PDF File Name and Location – Screen Shot with Notes

Below is a shot of the screen that asks you to select the PDF file name and location, with accompanying notes:



Notes:

- The file selected **MUST** be in PDF format with a .pdf suffix. If the file is not in PDF format, the system will not be able to read the file.
- If you do not attach a document, the following prompt will occur:

- Click on the *OK* button and then click on the *Browse* button.
- If you need additional assistance with the PDF process, you may wish to view the computer-based training module, "Filing a Criminal Motion."

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Filing a Motion in a Criminal Case: Verifying That You Have Attached the Correct Document

Step 7 – Verify that you have attached the correct document by taking the following steps:

- Right click on the highlighted file name to open a quick menu.
- Left click on *open*. The PDF document will be opened by Adobe Acrobat or Acrobat Reader so that you can view the document and verify that it is the correct one.
- Close Adobe Acrobat or Acrobat Reader.
- Click the *open* button on the file upload screen.

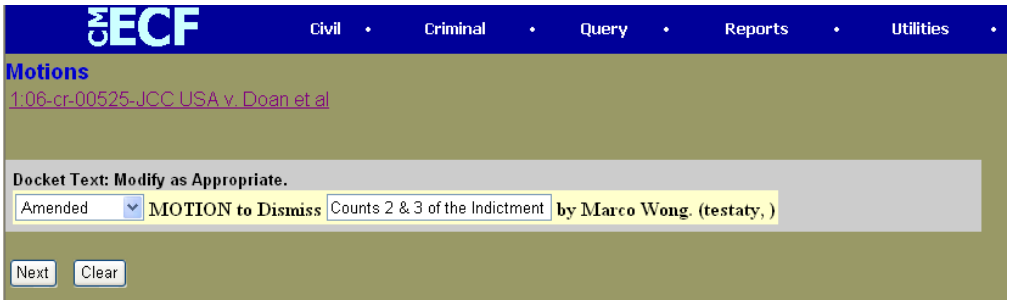
Filing a Motion in a Criminal Case: Modifying the Docket Entry

Step 8 – Modify the docket entry, if appropriate.

You can modify the docket entry in two ways:

- By selecting a modifier to go before the word *motion* from the dropdown list by clicking on the arrow and
- By typing more information about the motion in the white box following the word *Motion*. In general, white boxes in docket entries allow you to add additional text to the entries.

After you have made your modifications, if any, click on the *Next* button.



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Filing a Motion in a Criminal Case: Reviewing the Docket Entry for Accuracy

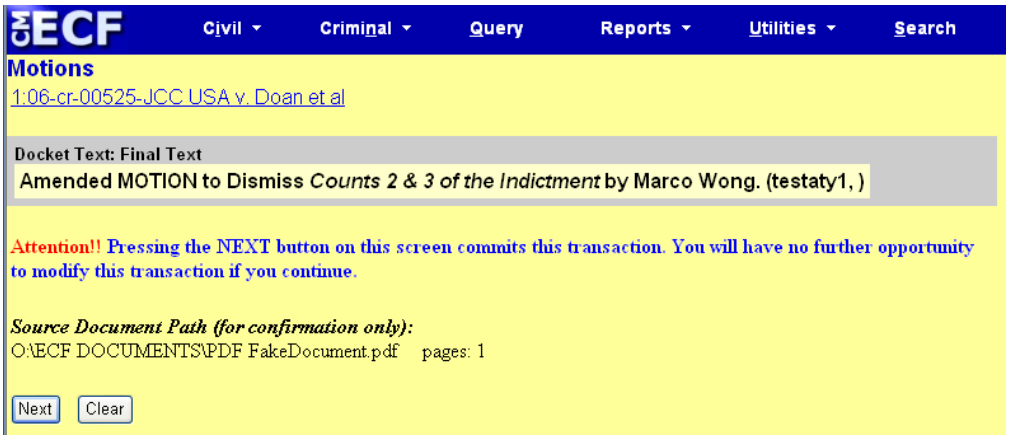
Step 9 – Review your docket entry for accuracy.

If the docket entry is…	Then…
Correct	Click on the *Next* button to commit the transaction. ***Note***: Once you click on the *Next* button, only clerk's office staff will be able to make any changes to the submission.
Incorrect	Click on *Criminal* on the main blue menu bar to abort the entry and start over.

Note: Once you have committed the transaction, the next screen that appears is the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF), your official filing receipt. To ensure that your transaction is complete, wait for the NEF before clicking on any other function.

The screen shot below shows that "Amended" was selected from the dropdown list and "Counts 2 and 3 of the indictment" was typed into the white box, so that the final docket text now reads, "Amended Motion to Dismiss Counts 2 and 3 of the Indictment."

This docket text is correct, so the next step would be to click on the *Next* button to commit the transaction.



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Filing a Motion in a Criminal Case: Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF)

ECF electronically transmits the NEF to the attorneys in the case who have supplied their e-mail addresses to the Court. Your transaction is complete once you have received the NEF, and the NEF is your proof of filing with the Court. Therefore, you should save either an electronic or a paper copy of the NEF.

To save a copy of the NEF either as an electronic record or as a paper document, see the chart below:

If you want to…	Then…
Save an electronic copy of the NEF	• Select *File* on your browser's menu bar. • Select *Save Frame As*… from the drop-down window and complete the rest of the steps.
Print a copy of the NEF	Select Print on your browser's toolbar.

Note: The NEF also displays the names and addresses of individuals who will not be electronically notified of the filing. It is the filing user's responsibility to serve paper copies of the document and of the NEF to attorneys and parties who are not receiving electronic notification.

Filing Procedures – Multi-Part Documents

Introduction

Because individual pleadings and motion reliefs require different responses from the Court and from the CM/ECF system, filing users are strongly encouraged to create a separate document for each pleading or motion relief.

However, if a filing user prepares a single document containing more than one pleading or more than one motion relief, the filing user must file the document as many times as there are pleadings or motion reliefs.

More Than One Pleading

A filing user who prepares a single document that contains more than one pleading must file that document as many times as there are pleadings and use a separate entry for each filing.

For example, if filing one document that contains both the *Plaintiff's Response to Defendant's Motion to Dismiss* and the *Plaintiff's Motion to Amend Complaint*, the filing user would first file the document using the event *Response to Motion* – and link it to the *Motion to Dismiss*. Once the filing user received the NEF for the *Response* filing, the filing user would then file and attach the same document again, this time using the event *Motion* as a separate entry.

More Than One Motion for Relief

A filing user who prepares a single document that contains more than one motion for relief must file that document as many times as there are motions for reliefs and use a separate motion relief entry for each filing.

For example, if filing one document that contains a motion to dismiss, a motion for summary judgment, and a motion to compel, the filing user would file and attach the same document three separate times as three separate motion reliefs.

Filing Procedures – Attachments to Documents

Overview

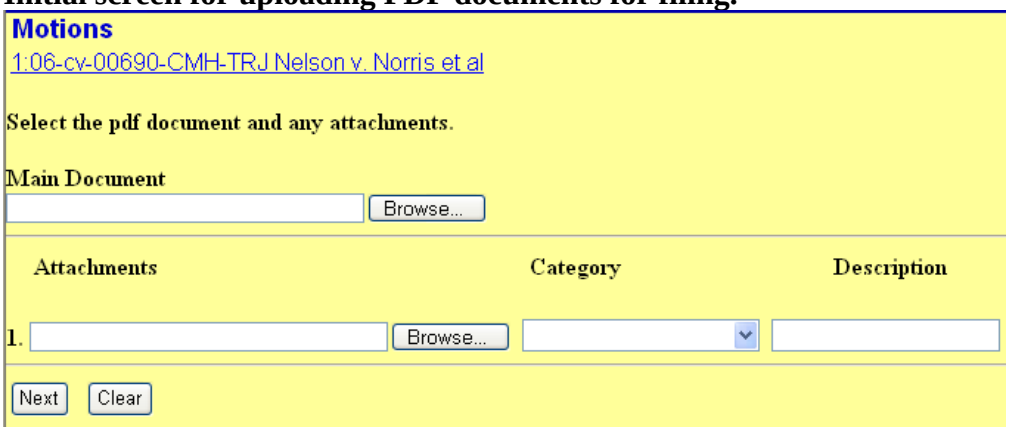
Sometimes it is necessary to attach a document to your filing, such as when submitting an exhibit with a motion, a proposed order with a motion, or a proposed amended complaint with a motion for leave to file an amended complaint. The procedures below show you how to attach a document to your filing.

Selecting the PDF Document Attachment

The screen where you select the PDF document you are filing is also the same screen where you select your attachment to the PDF document you are filing. To file an attachment with your document, after selecting the PDF main document:

- Click the *Browse* button under *Attachments* and select your PDF attachment document.
- Select a category or enter a description or both. A category must be selected or description must be entered for the attachment document. An error message will appear when you click the *Next* button if neither a category is selected nor a description entered.
- Click the *Next* button when finished uploading attachments.

Initial screen for uploading PDF documents for filing.



Information with respect to attachments:

- A new row will appear each time once an attachment is uploaded and the necessary category or description is entered.
- The last attachment space should remain blank when finished uploading attachments.
- The *Remove* button is used to completely remove an attachment.
- The *Browse* button is used to upload the PDF attachment as well as replacing one PDF attachment with another.
- The *Clear* button returns the screen to its original default state.

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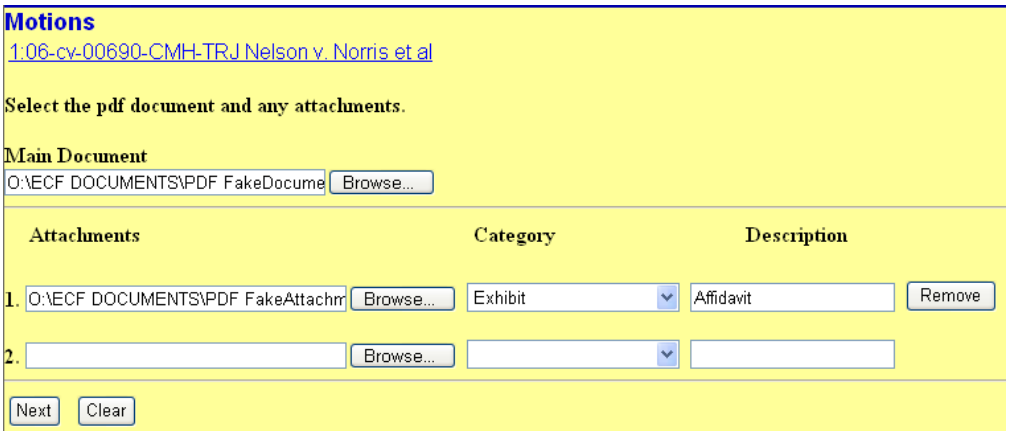
Screen Shot of the Completed PDF Document Selection and Attachment Screen

This screen shows that the PDF *Main Document* has been selected and an attachment PDF document has been selected. *Exhibit* was chosen as the *Category* and *Affidavit* was entered as the description for the attachment.



Filing Procedures – Adding/Creating a New Party

Overview

Sometimes, during the course of filing a document, filing users will need to add a new party to a case, such as when filing amended complaints, third party complaints, and motions by interested parties.

Note: Verify that you are filing in the correct case before adding a new party to the case.

Adding/ Creating a New Party: Process Overview

Below is an overview of the process for adding/creating a new party:

<table>
<tr><th>Step</th><th>Action</th></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>Click on the New Filer button on the right side of the pick filer screen during filing.</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>Search for the party name in the system.
<table>
<tr><th>If the search results…</th><th>Then…</th></tr>
<tr><td>Show a list of party names in the system, and your party name appears on the list</td><td>Select the party name by clicking on it and then click on the Select Party button.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Show a list of party names in the system, and your party name does not appear on the list</td><td>Click on the Create New Party button.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Indicate No person found</td><td>Click on the Create New Party button.</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td>Fill in the party’s complete name and the role of the party (i.e., movant) on the Party Information screen.
Note: Do not enter a party’s address.</td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>Click on the Add Party button at the bottom of the screen.</td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td>Click the Next button or New Filer button if adding more parties.</td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td>Create the attorney/party association.</td></tr>
<tr><td>7</td><td>Continue with the filing.</td></tr>
</table>

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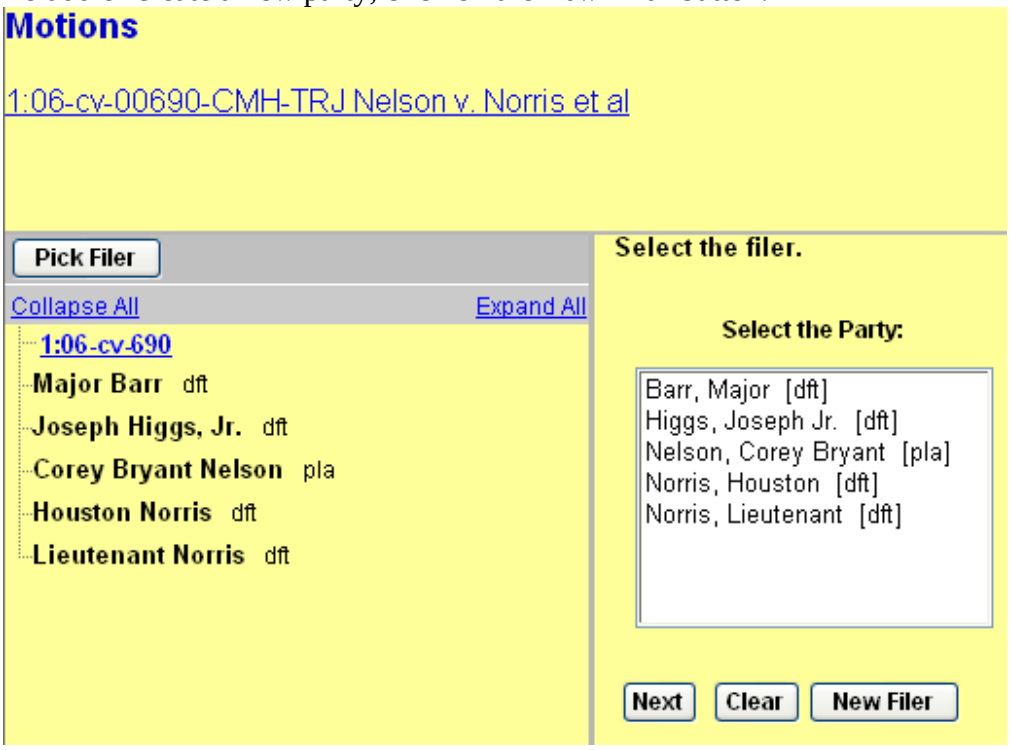
Adding/ Creating a New Party: *Add/Create New Party* Link

To add or create a new party, click on the *New Filer* button.



Note: The following pages will take you through two different possibilities and the accompanying examples.

- Example 1 (*Adding a New Party*) goes through what happens when a party's name is already in the system but not associated with the case. In this example, an individual's name has been used, but the same process would apply to a business name.
- Example 2 (*Creating a New Party*) goes through what happens when a party's name is not already in the system. In this example, a business name has been used, but the same process would apply to an individual's name.

Continued on next page

Adding a New Party: Searching for an Individual's Name in the System

Example 1 - Search for the party name in the system by taking the following steps:

- Type the last name of the individual. Capitalize the first letter of the individual's last name (e.g., *Smith*).
- Click on the *Search* button.

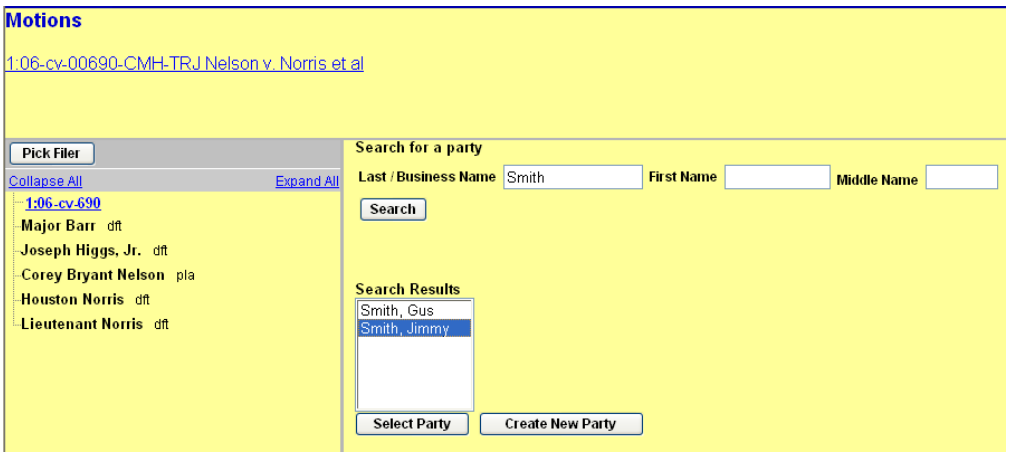
Continued on next page

Adding a New Party: Selecting from Search Results

Example 1 (continued) - Select the correct party from the search results, when applicable, as follows:

- Scroll through the party search results to find your party name.
- Click on the party name to select the correct party.
- Click on the *Select Party* button.

The screen shot below shows that *Jimmy Smith* was selected from the search results. The next step would be to click on the *Select Party* button.



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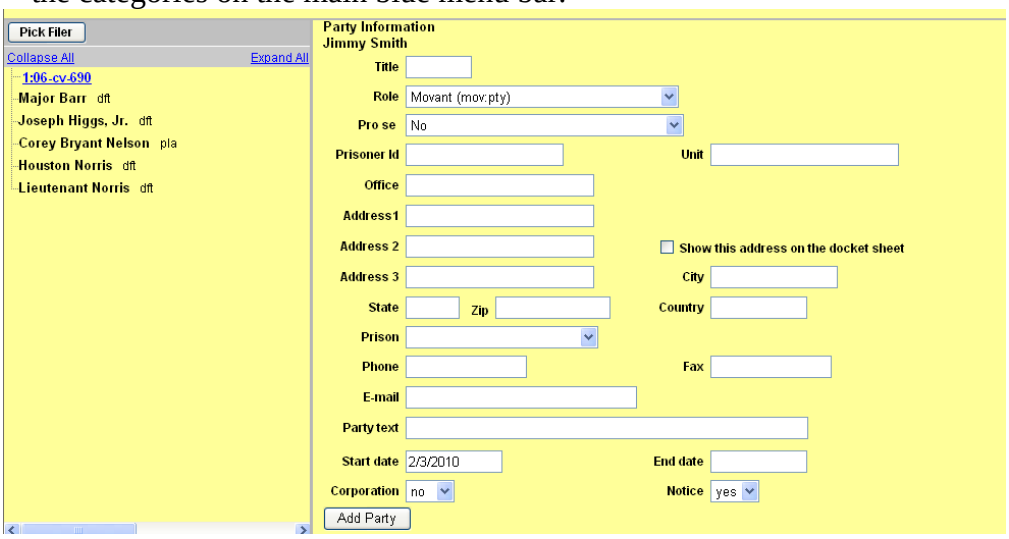
Adding a New Party: Party Information Screen

Example 1 (continued) - When you click on the *Select Party* button, the *Party Information* screen appears. Note that the party's name has been supplied at the top of the screen and cannot be modified.

- Use the *Party Information* screen to make changes as necessary:
  - *Role* -- change the party role by using the dropdown menu.
  - *Party text* -- add a description of the party (e.g., *President and C.E.O.*) if appropriate.
- After you make all necessary changes, click on the *Add Party* button.

Notes:

- You should not need to change the start date, since that field defaults to the date on which you enter the party information.
- Whatever information you enter into the *Party Information* screen's fields will subsequently be displayed at the beginning of the case's docket sheet.
- The party is not added to the case until you have completed the process. If you need to abort the process of adding the party to the case, click on one of the categories on the main blue menu bar.



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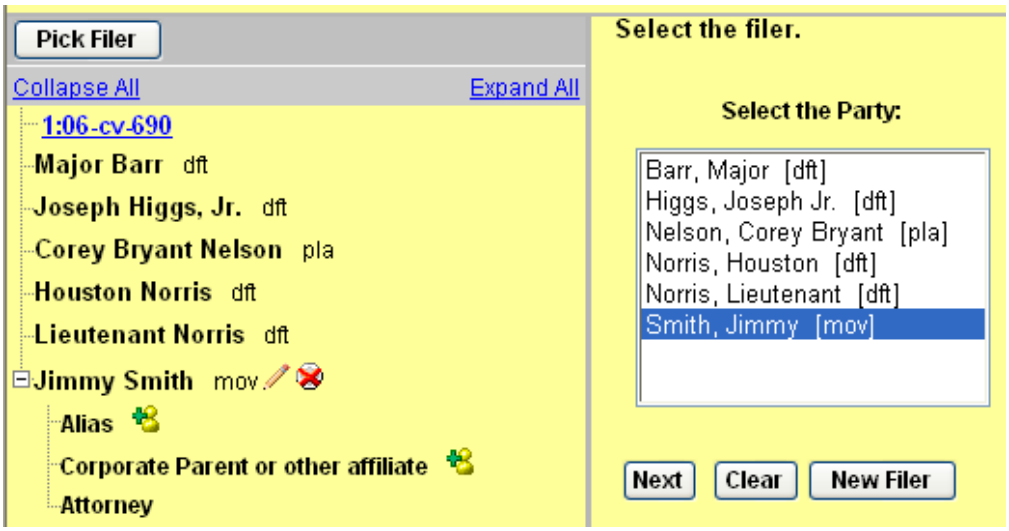
Adding a New Party: Completing the Process

Example 1 (continued) - Complete the process of adding a new party to the case by clicking on the *Add Party* button.

Note: The party is not added to the case until you have completed the process. If you need to abort the process of adding the party to the case, click on one of the categories on the main blue menu bar.

The screen shot below shows that the new party *Jimmy Smith* has been added to the party list. The next step would be to click on the *Next* button.



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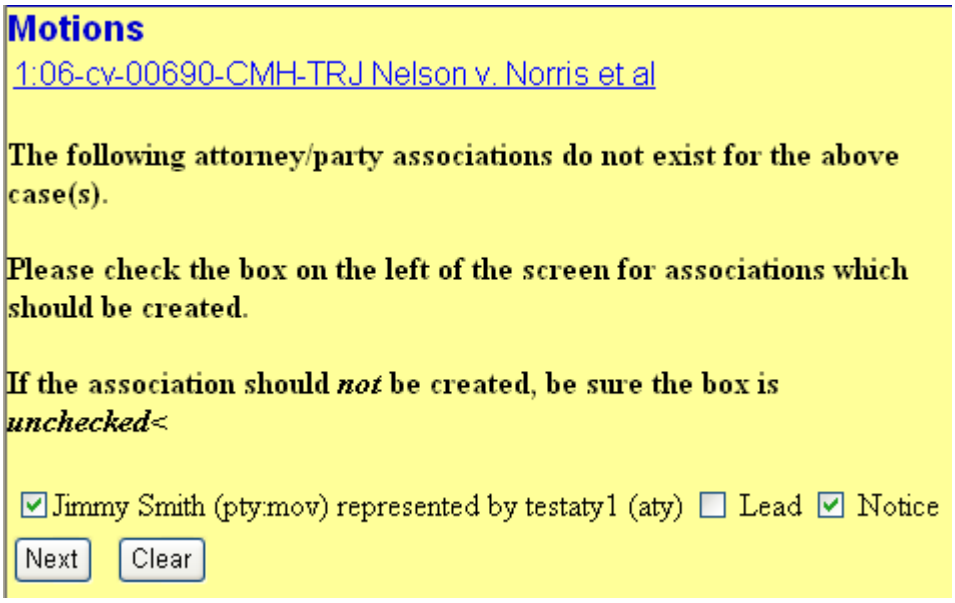
Adding a New Party: Creating the Attorney/Party Association

Example 1 (continued) - Create the attorney/party association by checking the *Lead* box and then clicking on the *Next* button. Continue filing in the case.

This shot shows what the screen looks like before you click in the *Lead* box.



Creating a New Party: Searching for a Business Name in the System

Example 2 - Search for a business name in the system by taking the following steps:

- Type the first few words of the company name, using initial caps (e.g., *Smith Fence*).
- Click on the *Search* button.

Continued on next page

Creating a New Party: Search Results

Example 2 (continued) - Create a new party in the system when the search does not yield the name of your party.

In the example below, searching for *Smith Fence Company* found no parties in the system with that name. The next step would be to click on the *Create new party* button.

Creating a New Party: Party Information Screen -- Notes

Example 2 (continued) – When you click on the *Create new party* button, the *Party Information* screen appears. Note that the party's name has been supplied in the *Last name* field at the top of the screen but may be modified. (See following page.)

- Use the *Party Information* screen to make changes as necessary:
  - *Last name* -- complete the last name, if necessary. (If you searched for the party using only a portion of the company name, e.g., *Jones Fence*, as shown below, you would need to complete the name by entering the word *Company* after *Fence* in the *Last name* field.)
  - *Role* -- change the party role by using the dropdown menu.
  - *Party text* -- add a description of the party (e.g., *a Virginia Corporation*).
- After you make all the necessary changes, click on the *Submit* button.

Notes:

- You should not need to change the start date, since that field defaults to the date on which you entered the party information.
- Whatever information you enter into the *Party Information* screen's fields will subsequently be displayed at the beginning of the case's docket sheet.

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Creating a New Party: Party Information Screen – Screen Shot

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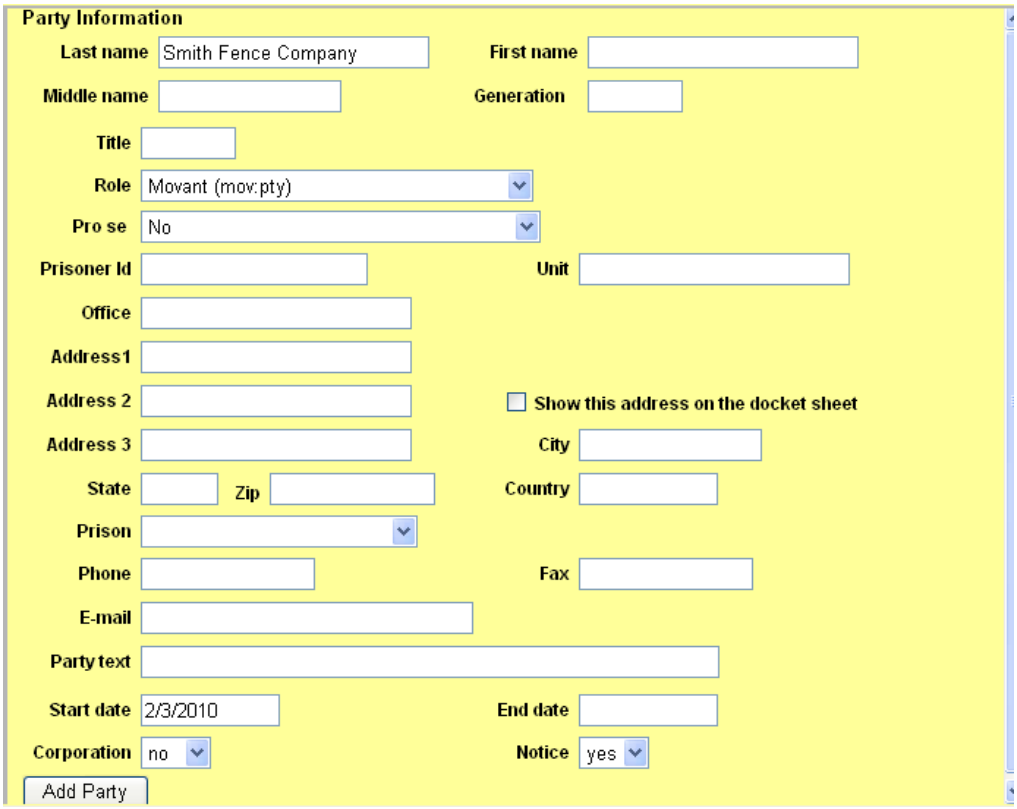

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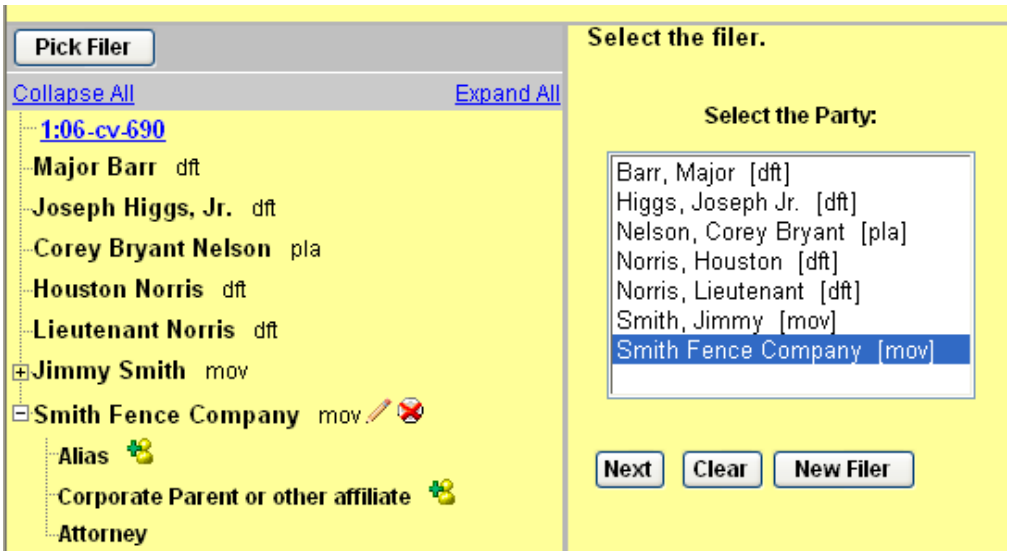
Creating a New Party: Completing the Process

Example 2 (continued) - Complete the process of adding a new party to the case by clicking on the *Next* button.

Note: The party is not added to the case until you have completed the process. If you need to abort the process of adding the party to the case, click on one of the categories on the main blue menu bar.

The screen shot below shows that the new party *Smith Fence Company* has been added to the party list.

The next step would be to click on the *Next* button.



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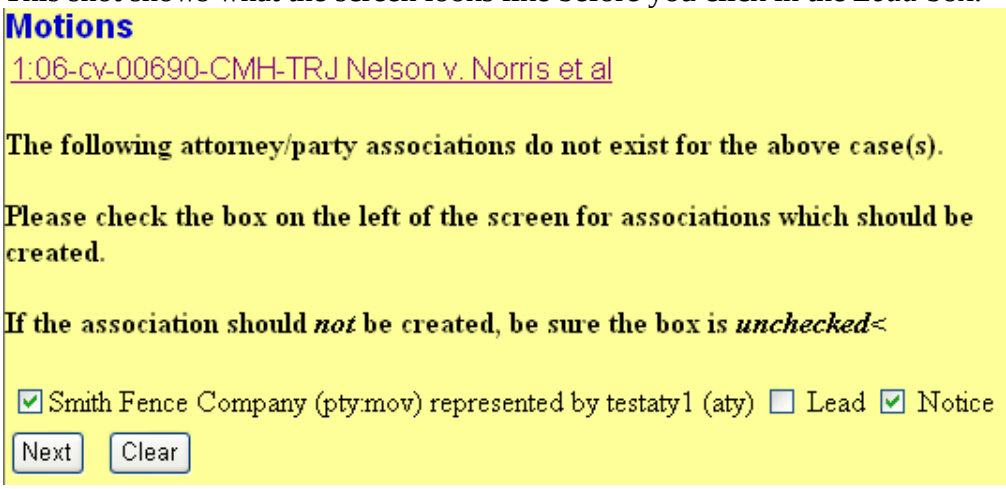
Creating a New Party: Creating the Attorney/Party Association

Example 2 - Create the attorney/party association by checking the *Lead* box and then clicking on the *Next* button. Continue filing in the case.

This shot shows what the screen looks like before you click in the *Lead* box.



Filing Procedures – Linking Documents

Overview

Some documents are related to other documents. You will need to create a link between those related documents, so that the following can occur:

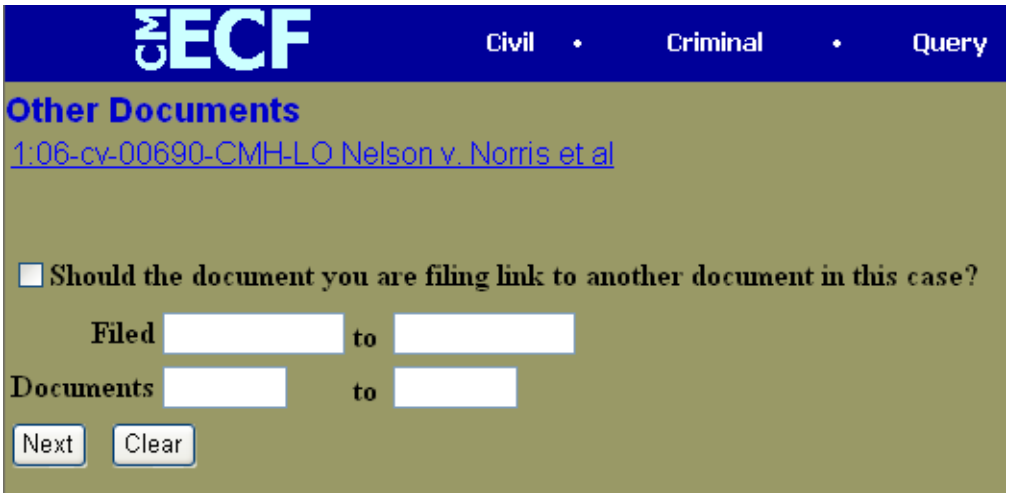
- the system knows to process the linked documents together (e.g., setting the same deadlines in regard to each document)
- the clerk's office knows which documents relate to which other documents and why you might be filing a particular document (e.g., when you are filing a response, you would link to the document to which you are responding), and
- readers of docket sheets can view the related documents (e.g., reading the motion for which a memorandum in support is filed).

The information below describes how to link related documents.

Linking Related Documents: Sample Screen Shot

When filing a document that may need to be linked to a previously filed document, you will be presented with the question, *Should the document you are filing link to another document in this case?*

See the sample screen shot below:



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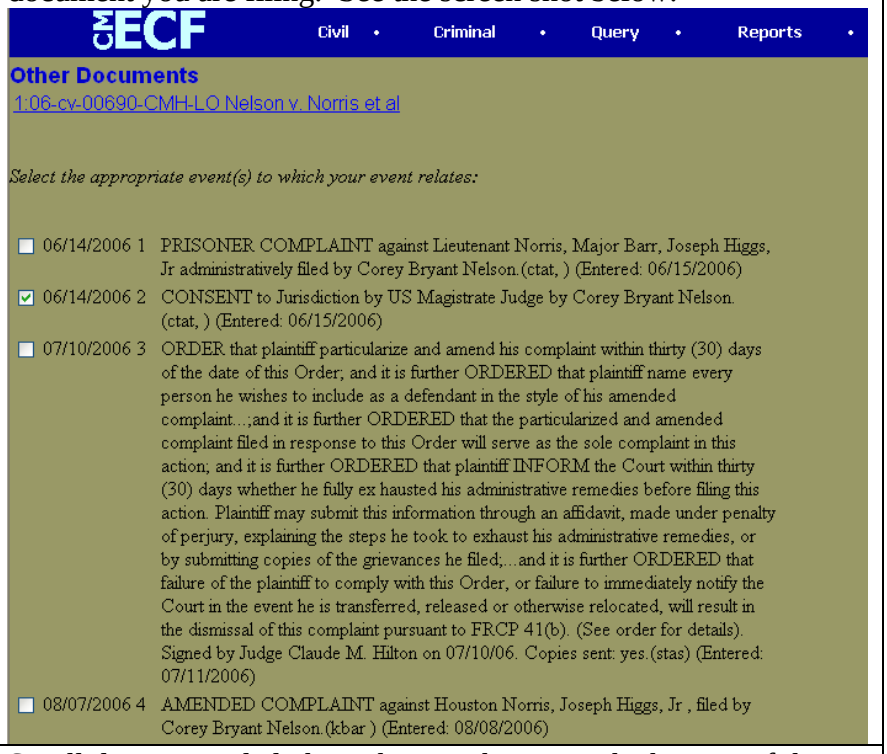
Linking Related Documents: Steps

Take the following steps to create a link between the document you are filing and a document previously filed:

Step	Action
1	Check the box next to the question *Should the document you are filing link to another document in this case?* ***Note***: Do not check the box if you do not need to create a link. Instead, simply click on the *Next* button and continue filing.
2	Click the *Next* button.
3	Check the box next to the document you want to link to the document you are filing. See the screen shot below: 
4	Scroll down to and click on the *Next* button at the bottom of the list of documents.
5	Modify the screen as appropriate and click on the *Next* button.
6	Click on the *Next* button on the next screen to commit the transaction.

Filing Procedures: Error Correction and Quality Control

Correcting a Mistake: Before You Commit a Transaction

You can correct a mistake any time before you commit a transaction by simply starting the filing process again. However, only clerk's office employees can make changes or corrections once a document has been transmitted.

Note: Do **not** attempt to correct a mistake by using your *Back* browser button. We have learned that, about 15% of the time, using your *Back* browser button will mean that your document does not get attached to your filing, and you won't discover this problem until you get the NEF, which will not have a hyperlink to your filed document. Therefore, to correct a mistake before you commit your transaction, simply click on the blue menu bar and begin filing your document again.

Correcting a Mistake: After You Commit a Transaction

If you realize, after you have committed a transaction, that you have made a mistake, do the following immediately:

- File the correct document or the corrected document, when appropriate.
- Call the appropriate clerk's office help desk phone number (between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.).

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Common Mistakes

Here is a list of ten common mistakes for which you should check before transmitting a document:

- Should this document be filed electronically, or is it one of the exceptions that should be filed on paper?
- Have you chosen the correct event?
- Have you filed in the correct case?
- Have you used the correct case caption on your document?
- Have you included a complete signature block?
- Have you redacted any personal identifiers in your PDF?
- Does your PDF have all the document's pages?
- Is the PDF or scanned document legible?
- Is the document you are filing the right one?
- Have you attached the correct documents, if any?

Note: Once you have transmitted your document, be sure to do the following:

- Save a copy of the NEF.
- Serve via U.S. mail any non-filing users in the case with a paper copy of the document and of the NEF.

Quality Control

The EDVA will be implementing a quality control program, in which all docket entries made by filing users will be checked.

When clerk's office staff members discover errors or when filing users call the help desk to notify clerk's office staff members of errors, clerk's office staff members will do the following:

- Notify the filing user by e-mail that the filing user has made an error (when clerk's office staff members discover the error).
- Correct the error or instruct the filing users to correct the error.
- Docket a *Notice of Correction* that will
  - appear as an entry on the docket sheet,
  - indicate what the error was and how it was corrected, and
  - send out NEFs to all filing users in the case.
- Send out paper copies of the NEF to all non-filing users in the case.

Filing Procedures: Computer-Based Training Modules

List of Topics

For your convenience, the EDVA has provided a link here to the PACER web site, which provides free access to some useful – though generic – computer-based training modules (created by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts) on the following topics:

- An Introduction to CM/ECF,
- Logging in to CM/ECF,
- Converting Documents to PDF,
- Windows File Management Part 1,
- Windows File Management Part 2,
- Setting Up Automatic E-mail,
- Filing a Civil Answer,
- Filing a Civil Motion,
- Filing a Civil Response to Motion,
- Queries,
- Filing a Criminal Motion, and
- Filing a Criminal Response to Motion.