Improving your E-filing in the Federal Court

Tech tips for preparing effective PDF documents

Creating text PDFs from Word Processing documents

Issue : Word processing documents are sometimes printed and scanned, when they could be converted directly to PDF.

Recommendation: Word or WordPerfect documents can be converted to PDF straight from Word or WordPerfect, thus avoiding the scanning step. This will result in better resolution, a smaller file-size, and more importantly - provide text search capability, as well as the ability to copy and paste.

Direct conversion to PDF can be done as well for stipulated motions, where both parties need to sign the document. Once approval is obtained from both attorneys, the word processing document can be signed with an s/Attorney Name for each attorney. (See E-filing Administrative Procedures II.A.2 for details)

OCR'ing Scanned PDF documents

Issue: Text-only documents are scanned, but not OCR'd. (OCR stands for Optical Character Recognition, which makes text accessible in the document).

Recommendation: For scanned documents (such as exhibits), where there is a considerable amount of text, please consider OCR'ing the scanned documents. OCR is available in Adobe Acrobat (as Recognize Text) and in most scanning/conversion softwares. This will enable 'text-searching' of the document, as well as provide the ability to 'copy and paste' and highlight while reading. This will generally make it easier for Chambers and other parties to review the documents.

E-filing scanned depositions that are available in text format

Issue: Depositions are scanned and e-filed, when they could have been prepared directly from a PDF version of the deposition

Recommendation: If an electronic, text version of the deposition is available, use that to prepare your PDF for e-filing, and avoid the scanning step. Individual pages can be extracted, and highlighted where desired, to create an efficient,

easily readable, searchable   document that the reader can easily annotate

If the electronic version of a deposition is not available, scan the deposition, and then OCR it. This will provide text-searching, and copy-and-paste and highlighting functionality, as well.

E-Filing exhibits with descriptive titles

Issue: Exhibits filed with minimal description.

Recommendation: When e-filing exhibits, it is helpful to include a description under the 'Description' column. This descriptive title makes the documents much easier to locate and access. (Reference E-filing Administrative Procedures II.E.5.b.) Please note the graphic below which illustrates this:

Description acceptable, but could be more helpful

ECF   Civil ▾

Document Selection Menu

Select the document you wish to view.

Document Number: 56   19 pages

Attachment	Description	
1	Exhibit A	2 pages
2	Exhibit B	2 pages
3	Exhibit C	2 pages
4	Exhibit D	2 pages
5	Exhibit E	28 pages
6	Exhibit F	3 pages

Good descriptions make documents more accessible

ECF   Civil ▾   Cri

Document Selection Menu

Select the document you wish to view.

Document Number: 57   57 pages

Attachment	Description	
1	Exhibit A - Evidentiary hearing transcript	13 pages
2	Exhibit B - Affidavit of Plea in Abeyance	5 pages
3	Exhibit C - Findings and Order	4 pages
4	Exhibit D - Mot to Suppress; Mot to Dismiss; Memo re Mot	11 pages

E-Filing Exhibit List with Memorandum or Declaration Exhibits

Issue: Exhibits filed with a document, without a list of the attached exhibits.

Recommendation: When e-filing a document with many exhibits, it is helpful to include a list of all the exhibits attached to that document, so they can be easily found.

Converting web pages to PDF

Issue: Web pages are printed to paper, and then scanned and e-filed.

Recommendation: Consider printing the web page directly to PDF from the browser. This will make the page text-searchable, and keep resolution and appearance optimal. You may need to ensure that the file size due to graphics, etc. do not exceed the current 50 MB per PDF document size restriction. Printing to PDF will make the file size smaller than scanning.

Where Scanning is needed: Scan most text documents in 'black-and-white'

Issue: Many black and white documents are scanned using full-color settings on the scanner, where they could be scanned in black and white, and come out with better resolution and contrast and a smaller file size.

Recommendation: If the source document is in black and white, generally you will get the best results if you scan it in black and white.   This is especially true if the source document is all text. This will also make it easier for OCR'ing (See above).

Exceptions are where color is needed to understand the document, where photographs are included, where tables are grey shaded, where highlighting is in use, or with very poor copy originals. In these cases, use your best judgment for scanning.

Summary: These are suggestions. Always please use your best judgment in preparing your PDFs to present your information in the best possible manner.   Call the Help Desk with any questions or suggestions.
   Hours: M-F
9 am - 4:30 pm - (801) 524-6100