



UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF CONNECTICUT

ATTORNEY CIVIL CASE OPENING INSTRUCTIONS

Revised May 30, 2014

Attorney Civil Case Opening Instructions

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Attorney Civil Case Opening Instructions

I. Introduction

Attorneys may electronically file new civil cases, which are initiated with a Complaint, a Notice of Removal, a Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus, and a Petition to Quash IRS Summons.

If you realize you made a mistake and it is during normal business hours, do not proceed further. Contact the Clerk's Office for assistance. If you made a mistake during the case opening process and it is outside business hours, please proceed to docket the lead event to maintain/preserve the file date and send an email to QualityControl@ctd.uscourts.gov explaining the circumstances and someone will respond during business hours.

- Bridgeport (203) 579-5861
- Hartford (860) 240-3200
- New Haven (203) 773-2140

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II. Case Opening Screen

Begin with logging into [CM/ECF](#)

Select Civil from the blue menu bar >Civil>Open a Case>Civil Case.

The screenshot shows the CM/ECF interface with a blue header bar containing 'Civil' and 'Criminal' dropdown menus. Below the header, the 'Civil Events' section is displayed. Under the 'Open a Case' heading, the 'Civil Case' link is circled in red. Other sections include 'Initial Pleadings and Service' with links for 'Complaints and Other Initiating Documents', 'Service of Process', 'Answers to Complaints', and 'Other Answers'; 'Motions and Related Filings' with links for 'Motions' and 'Responses, Replies and Supporting Documents'; and 'Other Filings' with links for 'Notices', 'Trial Documents', 'Appeal Documents', and 'Other Documents'.

The following display message will appear:

The screenshot shows a grey box with the title 'Open Civil Case'. Below the title is the text: 'ATTENTION: PLEASE BYPASS THE NEXT SCREEN WITHOUT MAKING ANY CHANGES. SIMPLY CLICK ON THE BUTTON LABELED NEXT.' At the bottom of the box are two buttons: 'Next' and 'Clear'.

Select Next. Do not make any changes to the next screen. Select Next.

The screenshot shows the 'Open Civil Case' form. It has a title 'Open Civil Case' and two dropdown menus: 'Office' (set to 'New Haven') and 'Case type' (set to 'cv'). Below these is the 'Date filed' field (5/23/2014). There are three text input fields: 'Other court name', 'Other court number', and 'JPML number'. At the bottom are 'Next' and 'Clear' buttons.

Do not make any changes to this screen.

If you have a related case, after you receive your judge assignment, notify the Courtroom Deputy for the presiding judge.

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III. Entering Civil Case Statistical Information

Complete the fields on this screen using the guidelines provided in the table below. Select Next.

Open Civil Case

Jurisdiction 3 (Federal Question)

Cause of action

Nature of suit 0 (zero)

Origin 1 (Original Proceeding)

Citizenship plaintiff

Citizenship defendant

Jury demand n (None) **Class action** n (No Class Action Alleged) **Demand (\$000)**

Arbitration code **County** Fairfield

Fee status pd (paid) **Fee date** 5/23/2014 **Date transfer**

Jurisdiction	1 (U.S. Government Plaintiff) 2 (U.S. Government Defendant) 3 (Federal Question) default 4 (Diversity) must enter citizenship for diversity case 5 (Local Question) court use only
Cause of action	Select the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing, as cited in the initiating document.
Nature of suit	Select the primary nature of suit from the drop down list. (Refer to Civil Cover Sheet for guidance; do not use 990).
Origin	1 (Original Proceeding) used when filing an original complaint 2 (Removal from State Court) used when filing a Notice of Removal All other codes are for Court use only
Citizenship	Complete this field only if the selected jurisdiction is diversity.
Jury demand	Complete this field only if the jury demand is contained in the initiating document.
Class action	n = no (No Class Action Alleged) y = yes (Class Action Alleged)
Demand (\$000)	Dollar amount demanded in thousands, e.g. \$100,000 = 100; complete this field only if dollar demand is contained in the initiating document or on the civil cover sheet. Leave blank for Notice of Removal.
Arbitration code	Leave blank
County	County is a statistical code for the county of residence of the first listed plaintiff in all actions except U.S. government plaintiff actions. If the U.S. government is the plaintiff, enter the statistical code for the county of residence of the first listed defendant.
Fee status	Leave default (paid); for government plaintiff set fee status to none (no fee required); for IFP plaintiffs, set fee status to in forma pauperis.
Fee date	Leave default
Date transfer	Leave blank

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IV. Adding Parties

The left pane contains the controls to **Add New Party** and **Create Case**; this section is the participant tree. Since no participants exist for this new case, the participant tree is empty.

The right pane contains the fields to **Search for a party**. Using the Court's [Instructions for Searching and Adding Parties](#), search for each party listed in the caption of your initiating document. Choose the appropriate party from the list and select "Select Party." If the appropriate party does not appear in the list, select "Create New Party."

The screenshot displays the 'Open Civil Case' interface. On the left, there are buttons for 'Add New Party' and 'Create Case', along with 'Collapse All' and 'Expand All' links. Below these is a participant tree showing a single entry: '3:14-cv-?????'. On the right, the 'Search for a party' section includes input fields for 'Last / Business Name' (containing 'Smith'), 'First Name' (containing 'John'), and 'Middle Name'. A 'Search' button is positioned below these fields. Underneath, a 'Search Results' list shows two entries: 'Smith, John' and 'Smith-Jones, John'. At the bottom of the search section are 'Select Party' and 'Create New Party' buttons.

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V. Participant Screen

The Role field is defaulted to Defendant as shown below. This must be changed to the appropriate role.

If you have descriptive information for a party as reflected in the case caption, enter the description in the party text field. Leave all other fields blank. Do not enter address information.

Select Add Party.

Open Civil Case

[Add New Party](#) [Create Case](#)

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

3:14-cv-?????

Party Information
John Smith

Title

Role

Pro se

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 Notice

[Add Party](#)

[Start a New Search](#)

When the user clicks the **Add Party** button on the Party Information screen, the party will be added to the Participant Tree on the left side of the screen.

Open Civil Case

[Add New Party](#) [Create Case](#)

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

3:14-cv-?????

John Smith pla

Alias

Corporate Parent or other affiliate

Attorney

ABC Company dft

Alias

Corporate Parent or other affiliate

Attorney

Search for a party

Last / Business Name First Name Middle Name

[Search](#)

The right pane of the screen returns to Search for a party. Continue to add all parties as they appear in the caption of your initiating document.



Social Security Cases – Enter the parties as they are captioned in the initiating document. In addition, enter the party "Social Security Administration" (unabbreviated) as an "Interested Party." This will enable the General Counsel's Office and the document production facility that produces the administrative transcripts to receive timely notification of all activity in these cases.

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VI. Functional Icons

Once all parties are added to the Participant Tree, please review the information for accuracy. The functional icons displayed next to a participant's name allow you to make the following modifications at this point in the case opening process:

-  Delete this party from this case
-  Add new alias
-  Edit the party or alias

To delete an incorrect party, click on the  icon. Search for the correct party and add the correct party to the case. To make changes to the role or party text fields, click on the  icon. To add an alias, click on the  icon, search for the alias name and select the proper alias type as shown below. To delete an alias, click on the  icon.

Alias Types	Description
agent	agent of
aka	also known as
aso	as subrogee of
dba	doing business as
fdba	formally doing business as
fka	formerly known as
nee	born
nka	now known as
obo	on behalf of
other	other
rpi	real party in interest
suc	successor
ta	trading as

Select only when you are finished adding all parties and have reviewed the Participant Tree. Select Yes. If you forgot to add all parties, you will be given another opportunity when filing the initiating document.

Case Opening

Case will be created. Proceed?

Once the case has been created it is too late to click the back button  on your browser. If you realize you made a mistake and it is during normal business hours, do not proceed further but contact the Clerk's office for assistance. If you made a mistake during the case opening process and it is outside business hours, please proceed to docket the lead event to maintain/preserve the file date and send an email to QualityControl@ctd.uscourts.gov explaining the circumstances and someone will respond during business hours.

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VII. Docketing Lead Event

User will be prompted:

Open Civil Case

Case Number 14-28 has been opened.

[Docket Lead Event?](#)

Your new case number will be automatically generated. **Please note your new case number for subsequent filings.**

Click on the link to docket lead event now; select the appropriate event. Select Next.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

Available Events (click to select an event)

Amended Complaint
Apportionment Complaint
Arbitration Petition
Complaint
Counterclaim
Crossclaim
Intervenor Complaint
Notice of Removal
Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus
Petition to Quash IRS Summons
Third Party Complaint

Next

Clear

Selected Event

Complaint

Select Next.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

Civil Case Number

3:14-cv-28

Next

Clear

Verify short caption. Select Next.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

[3:14-cv-00028 Smith v. ABC Company](#)

Next

Clear

Select the filer. Select Next.

Attorney Civil Case Opening Instructions

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents
[3:14-cv-00028 Smith v. ABC Company](#)

Pick Filer

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

- ABC Company dft
- John Smith pla

Select the filer.

Select the Party:

- ABC Company [dft]
- Smith, John [pla]



If you forgot to add a filer, you may do so here by selecting the New Filer button and adding the additional party. The new party will then appear in the Participant Tree and in the Select the Party list.

Check the box to the left of the party name to associate your appearance with the party. Select Next.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents
[3:14-cv-00028 Smith v. ABC Company](#)

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 Smith (pty:pla) represented by pilot14 (aty)

Select the appropriate party that this filing is against. If you are filing a Notice of Removal, this filing is against the plaintiff. Select Next.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents
[3:14-cv-00028 Smith v. ABC Company](#)

Pick Party

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

- John Smith pla
- ABC Company dft

Please select the party that this filing is against.

Select the Party: **OR** **Select a Group:**

- Smith, John [pla]
- ABC Company [dft]

No Group
 All Defendants
 All Plaintiffs
 All Parties



If you forgot to add a party that this filing is against, you may do so here by selecting the New Party button and adding the additional party. The new party will then appear in the Participant Tree and in the Select the Party list.

You may choose the All Defendants radio button, or, for Notices of Removal, the All Plaintiffs radio button.

Attorney Civil Case Opening Instructions

Browse for your PDF document, right click and open the document to verify file, click open to upload and proceed to add any attachments. If you would like to upload your civil cover sheet, please upload it as an attachment. When you have completed adding all attachments, select Next.



Documents filed electronically must be filed in OCR text-searchable PDF format with an electronic or a scanned signature and must comply with the redaction requirements of [Fed. R. Civ. P. 5.2](#)

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

[3:14-cv-00028 Smith v. ABC Company](#)

Select the pdf document and any attachments.

Main Document

R:\Training\CMECF Training\Complaint

Attachments	Category	Description
1. <input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Browse..."/> <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Verify your case number. Select Next.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

[3:14-cv-00028 Smith v. ABC Company](#)

The following display message will appear. Select Next.

AFTER you successfully efile your complaint and receive your notice of electronic filing, if you require a summons, please submit your request using the event REQUEST TO ISSUE SUMMONS located in the service of process group.

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VIII. Filing Fee Information

Unless you are filing on behalf of the USA, or are filing a Motion to Proceed In Forma Pauperis, you must answer “No” on this screen. Select Next.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents
[3:14-cv-00028 Smith v. ABC Company](#)
Is this filed with an Application to Proceed Without Prepayment of Fees?
or
Is this application filed on behalf of the USA?
 Yes
 No

The following display message will appear. Select Next.

After payment of the filing fee, you **MUST** continue with the docket transaction until its completion. Failure to continue will result in your credit card being charged, with no record of your entry on the docket.

The required fee will be displayed. Select Next.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents
[3:14-cv-00028 Smith v. ABC Company](#)
Fee: \$400

The following message will appear:

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents
[3:14-cv-00028 Smith v. ABC Company](#)
Now loading the payment processing screen. This process might take a few seconds.

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IX. Entering Payment Information

- This is the first screen of the pay.gov process. There are two screens. Note that all fields marked with the asterisk are required to be completed.
- The Account Holder does not need to be the same as the attorney filer. For example, the credit card being used could be that of the law firm. Enter the account holder name as it appears on the credit card.
- This is a secure site administered by pay.gov.
- After payment of the filing fee, you **MUST** continue with the docket transaction until its completion. Failure to continue will result in your credit card being charged, with no record of your entry on the docket.

Online Payment [Return to your originating application](#)

Step 1: Enter Payment Information 1 | 2

Pay Via Plastic Card (PC) (ex: American Express, Discover, Mastercard, VISA)

Required fields are indicated with a red asterisk *

Account Holder Name: *

Payment Amount: \$400.00

Billing Address: *

Billing Address 2:

City:

State / Province:

Zip / Postal Code:

Country:

Card Type: * 

Card Number: * (Card number value should not contain spaces or dashes)

Security Code: * [Help finding your security code](#)

Expiration Date: * / *

Select the "Continue with Plastic Card Payment" button to continue to the next step in the Plastic Card Payment Process.

Note: Please avoid navigating the site using your browser's Back Button - this may lead to incomplete data being transmitted and pages being loaded incorrectly. Please use the links provided whenever possible.

Select Continue with Plastic Card Payment.

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X. Authorizing Payment Information

- The final payment screen provides the filer with an opportunity to authorize the payment. The only required field on this screen is the Authorization Box, which must be checked to continue. If you fail to check the box, the transaction will not be completed and pay.gov will return to this screen until the authorization is marked.
- The e-mail confirmation receipt does not need to be the same e-mail address as the attorney filer. For example, the user may wish the credit card receipt be e-mailed to your finance office.
- Note that the e-mail address is not a required field. If it is left blank, no email receipt will be generated from pay.gov.

[Online Payment](#) [Return to your originating application](#)

Step 2: Authorize Payment 1 | 2

[Payment Summary](#) [Edit this information](#)

Address Information	Account Information	Payment Information
Account Holder Name: pilot14 Billing Address: 141 Church St Billing Address 2: City: State / Province: Zip / Postal Code: Country: USA	Card Type: Visa Card Number: *****2222	Payment Amount: \$400.00 Transaction Date and Time: 05/23/2014 14:27 EDT

Email Confirmation Receipt
To have a confirmation sent to you upon completion of this transaction, provide an email address and confirmation below.

Email Address:

Confirm Email Address:

CC: Separate multiple email addresses with a comma

Authorization and Disclosure
Required fields are indicated with a red asterisk *

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

Press the "Submit Payment" Button only once. Pressing the button more than once could result in multiple transactions.

Note: Please avoid navigating the site using your browser's Back Button - this may lead to incomplete data being transmitted and pages being loaded incorrectly. Please use the links provided whenever possible.

Select Submit Payment.

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XI. Completing Your Transaction

It is not necessary to add any additional text. Select Next.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents
[3:14-cv-00028 Smith v. ABC Company](#)

Docket Text: Modify as Appropriate.

COMPLAINT against ABC Company (Filing fee \$400 receipt number 0205-160310.) , filed by John Smith. (pilot14,)

By selecting Next your transaction will be complete. Select Next.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents
[3:14-cv-00028 Smith v. ABC Company](#)

Docket Text: Final Text

COMPLAINT against ABC Company (Filing fee \$400 receipt number 0205-160310.) , filed by John Smith.(pilot14,)

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):
Complaint Form.pdf pages: 1

Notice of Electronic Filing is generated.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents
[3:14-cv-00028 Smith v. ABC Company](#)

United States

Notice of Electronic Filing

The following transaction was entered by pilot14, on 5/23/2014 at 2:30 PM EDT and filed on 5/23/2014

Case Name: Smith v. ABC Company
Case Number: [3:14-cv-00028](#)
Filer: John Smith
Document Number: [1](#)
Judge(s) Assigned: None (please contact the court)

Docket Text:
COMPLAINT against ABC Company (Filing fee \$400 receipt number 0205-160310.) , filed by John Smith.(pilot14,)

3:14-cv-00028 Notice has been electronically mailed to:

3:14-cv-00028 Notice has been delivered by other means to:

pilot14

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

Document description:Main Document
Original filename:n/a
Electronic document Stamp:
[STAMP dcecfStamp_ID=1034868047 [Date=5/23/2014] [FileNumber=77677-0]
[2a156a5a2ccdca8be889f4c1e09b5af917fd68a04979eaf9383b08244137660386af
b7a00a0d044fa2ec76d00d33a3c18c4315f322d53c6f9d9dbe6843592f57]]

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If you would like the Clerk to issue a summons, please remember to docket your Request to Issue Summons located in the Service of Process group.

The Clerk's office will notify you of the random judge assignment. All standard case opening orders and requested summonses will be issued electronically after the judge has been assigned.

For cases filed with a Motion to Proceed In Forma Pauperis, requested summonses will be issued electronically after the granting of the Motion.