



**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**  
DISTRICT OF CONNECTICUT

# **SEARCH WARRANT CASE OPENING INSTRUCTIONS**

**Revised April 29, 2013**

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## Opening Non-Sealed Search Warrant MJ Cases

Search warrants can only be filed when a return has been made before a judge, either executed or unexecuted. Search warrants are assigned MJ case numbers in CM/ECF even if signed by a district judge. If a search warrant already has a CR docket number, **do not** open a new MJ case. The search warrant should be entered on the related criminal case.

Follow the instructions below to open a non-sealed application for search warrant mj case.

1. Click on “**Criminal**” in the blue menu bar. Under Open a Case, select “**Criminal Case Unassigned.**”
2. At the case opening screen, leave office defaulted to New Haven, change the case type to **mj**, select the county where the offense occurred, and leave all other information on this screen blank. Click “**Next.**”

The screenshot shows the 'Open Unassigned Criminal Case' form in the CM/ECF system. The form is titled 'Open Unassigned Criminal Case' and has a blue header with navigation tabs: Civil, Criminal, Query, Reports, and Utilities. The form fields are as follows:

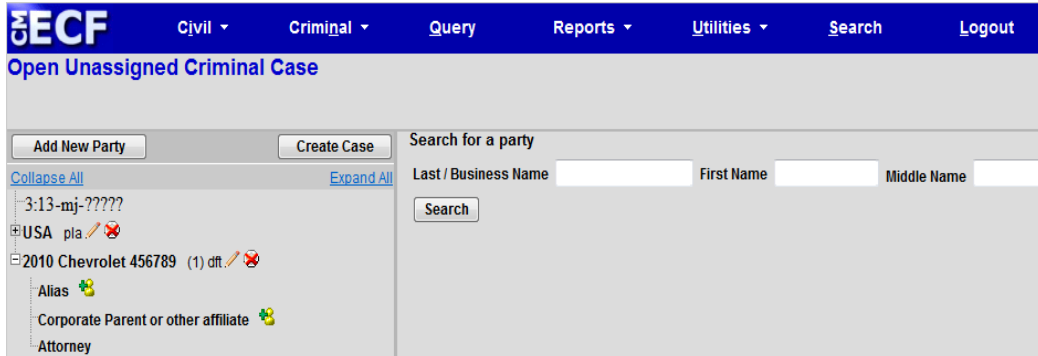
- Office: New Haven (dropdown)
- Case type: mj (dropdown)
- Date filed: 1/10/2013
- County: New Haven (dropdown)
- Other court: Name (text field), Number (text field)
- Buttons: Next, Clear

3. At the party screen, the USA will automatically appear as the plaintiff. Using the Court’s [Instructions for Searching and Adding Parties](#), search for the party captioned on the Application for Search Warrant. (See also: [Appendix A: Cheat Sheet for: Searching & Adding Real/Personal Property](#)). Choose the appropriate party from the list and click “**Select Party.**” If appropriate party does not appear in the list, click “**Create New Party.**”

The screenshot shows the party search screen in the CM/ECF system. The form is titled 'Open Unassigned Criminal Case' and has a blue header with navigation tabs: Civil, Criminal, Query, Reports, and Utilities. The form fields are as follows:

- Buttons: Add New Party, Create Case
- Search for a party: Last / Business Name (2010), First Name (text field), Search (button)
- Search Results:
  - 2010 Chevrolet 456789
  - 2010 Ford F-150
  - 2010 Ford F-150 Vin 123456
  - 2010 Ford F-150 Vin 123456
  - 2010 Ford F150 Vin 123456
  - 2010 Ford-F150 Vin 123456
- Buttons: Select Party, Create New Party

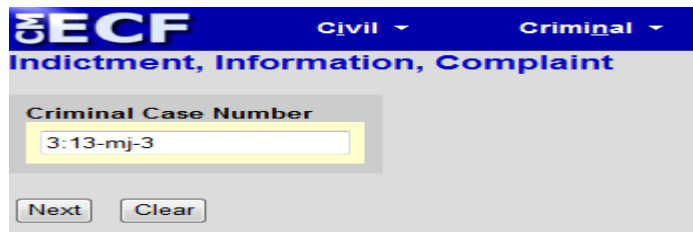
- Verify that the correct defendant has been selected before clicking **“Add Party.”**  
The defendant will now be added to the **“Participant Tree”** along with the USA.



- Click **“Create Case”** and **“Yes”** when asked **“Case will be created. Proceed?”**
- Click **“Docket Lead Event?”** at the screen below. **Note:** the case number will be provided on this screen.



- Select **“Application for Search Warrant”** and click **“Next.”**
- At the screen below, verify the case number created above is correct or if this field is blank, enter the mj case number created. Click **“Next”** twice to proceed to the **“Select the filer”** screen.



- Select **“USA”** as the filer and click **“Next.”**

10. At the screen below, check the box to the left of “USA” to associate your appearance with the party. Do not uncheck the “Lead” or “Notice” boxes. Click “Next.”

11. Upload the PDF of the application, attach the affidavit and click “Next.”

 **NOTE: Ensure the judge’s signature is replaced with /s/ before uploading documents.**

12. From the drop down menu, select the judge who signed the application and click “Next.”

The screenshot shows the ECF system interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs for "Civil", "Criminal", and "Query". Below these, the text reads "Indictment, Information, Complaint" followed by the case number "3:13-mj-00003 USA v. 2010 Chevrolet 456789". A red instruction says "Select the judge who entered order or held hearing." Below this is a dropdown menu with a blue bar and a downward arrow. At the bottom of the form are two buttons: "Next" and "Clear".

13. Complete the transaction by clicking “Next” twice. The Notice of Electronic Filing screen below is the final screen of the case opening process.

The screenshot shows the ECF system interface with the "Notice of Electronic Filing" screen. The top navigation bar includes "Civil", "Criminal", "Query", "Reports", "Utilities", "Search", and "Logout". The case information is repeated: "Indictment, Information, Complaint" and "3:13-mj-00003 USA v. 2010 Chevrolet 456789". The court is identified as "U.S. District Court" and "United States District Court for the District of Connecticut TEST DATABASE". The "Notice of Electronic Filing" section states: "The following transaction was entered by pilot1, on 1/10/2013 at 9:41 AM EST and filed on 1/10/2013". It lists the case name, case number, filer, and document number. The "Docket Text" section shows the application for the search warrant with an affidavit, signed by Holly B. Fitzsimmons.

After the Application for Search Warrant has been docketed, the Clerk’s Office will:

- Perform a quality control review,
- Assign the judge who issued the warrant,
- Enter the Electronic Filing Order and,
- Docket the Search Warrant Issued event.

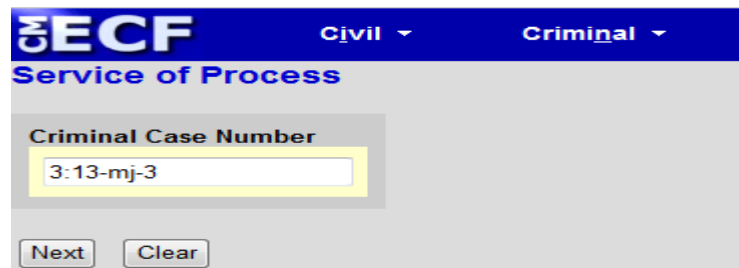
Once you receive the Notice of Electronic Filing for these events, you may proceed to the instructions on the next page to docket the Search Warrant Returned event.

## Docketing the Search Warrant Returned Event

Once the case has been opened, there will be a quality control review before it is sent to case assignment to have the judge added to the case. The case administrator for the judge who signed the application will docket the **“Search Warrant Issued”** event.

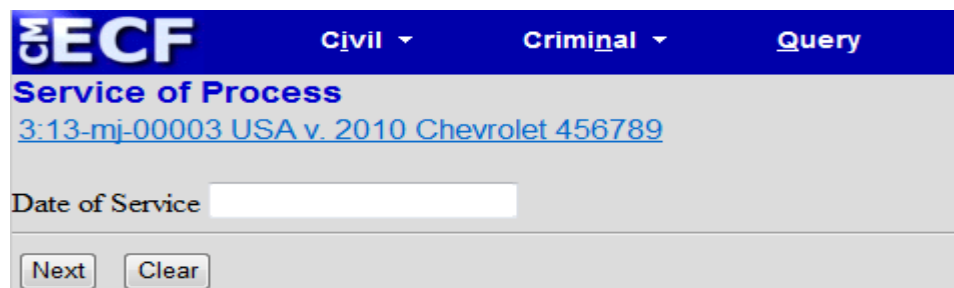
When the Notice of Electronic Filing is received by the AUSA, use the steps below to docket the appropriate search warrant returned event.

1. Click on **“Criminal”** in the blue menu bar. Under **“Other Filings”**, select **“Service of Process.”**
2. Select **“Search Warrant Returned Executed”** or **“Search Warrant Returned Unexecuted”** and click **“Next.”**
3. At the screen below, enter the mj case number you are docketing the **Search Warrant Returned** event on. Click **“Next”** at this screen and the following screen to continue to upload the PDF.



The screenshot shows the ECF (Electronic Case Filing) interface. At the top, there is a blue header with the ECF logo and two dropdown menus: "Civil" and "Criminal". Below the header, the text "Service of Process" is displayed. A form field labeled "Criminal Case Number" contains the text "3:13-mj-3". Below the form field are two buttons: "Next" and "Clear".

4. Upload the PDF of the Executed/Unexecuted Search Warrant and click **“Next.”**
5. When docketing the **“Search Warrant Returned Executed”** event, you will get the screen below, enter the date the search warrant was served for Date of Service and click **“Next.”**



The screenshot shows the ECF (Electronic Case Filing) interface. At the top, there is a blue header with the ECF logo and three dropdown menus: "Civil", "Criminal", and "Query". Below the header, the text "Service of Process" is displayed. A link for the case "3:13-mj-00003 USA v. 2010 Chevrolet 456789" is shown. Below the link is a form field labeled "Date of Service" which is currently empty. Below the form field are two buttons: "Next" and "Clear".

6. Complete the transaction by clicking **“Next”** twice. The Notice of Electronic Filing screen below is the final screen for docketing this event.

**ECF** Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Logout

Service of Process  
[3:13-mj-00003 USA v. 2010 Chevrolet 456789](#)

U.S. District Court  
United States District Court for the District of Connecticut

**Notice of Electronic Filing**

The following transaction was entered by pilot1, on 1/10/2013 at 9:55 AM EST and filed on 1/10/2013  
Case Name: USA v. 2010 Chevrolet 456789  
Case Number: [3:13-mj-00003](#)  
Filer:  
Document Number: [2](#)

Docket Text:  
[Search Warrant Returned Executed on 01/01/2013 in case as to 2010 Chevrolet 456789 \(pilot1, \)](#)

**Please Note:** If you are docketing the Warrant Returned Unexecuted event, the entry will be restricted on the docket and you will not receive a Notice of Electronic Filing for this event. Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure 49.1 Notes<sup>1</sup> states:

“The Judicial Conference Committee on Court Administration and Case Management has issued “Guidance for Implementation of the Judicial Conference Policy on Privacy and Public Access to Electronic Criminal Case Files” (March 2004). This document sets out limitations on remote electronic access to certain sensitive materials in criminal cases. It provides in part as follows:

The following documents shall not be included in the public case file and should not be made available to the public at the courthouse or via remote electronic access:

- unexecuted summonses or warrants of any kind (e.g., search warrants, arrest warrants);...

<sup>1</sup> “Rule 49.1 Privacy Protection For Filings Made with the Court.” *Legal Information Institute*. Cornell University School of Law, n.d. Web. 17 Apr. 2013. <[http://www.law.cornell.edu/rules/frcmp/rule\\_49.1](http://www.law.cornell.edu/rules/frcmp/rule_49.1)>.



## Appendix A: Cheat Sheet for Searching & Adding Real/Personal Property

Before adding new parties to the database, please search the database to determine if the party already exists. It is likely that the party will need to be created and should be added as it is captioned on the application for search warrant.

Add the party name in the last name field and all descriptive information to the party text field. Please see the examples below as a guideline for entering new parties.

**Example:** One 2005 Blue Nissan Maxima VIN# 123456789  
**Last Name:** 2005 Blue Nissan Maxima VIN# 123456789  
**Party text:** One

**Example:** 5 Sun Street, Hartford, CT  
**Last name:** 5 Sun Street, Hartford, CT

**Example:** \$10,000.00, US Currency held in safe deposit box #123 at People's Bank  
**Last name:** \$10,000.00, US Currency  
**Party Text:** held in safe deposit box #123 at People's Bank

**Example:** UPS Package, tracking number 123456789, addressed to John Smith, 123 Main Street, Anywhere, CT  
**Last name:** UPS Package, tracking number 123456789  
**Party Text:** addressed to John Smith, 123 Main Street, Anywhere, CT