

Comprehensive Reference Manual

# Electronic Case Filing System

United States Bankruptcy Court  
District of Utah



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**Please Note:**

This manual was revised prior to the October 17, 2005 implementation of the new bankruptcy act. We have made a conscious effort to update this material to reflect those changes. If you find something that is out of date with regards to the new bankruptcy act, please contact the training department at a number above so that we may make the appropriate correction.

This guide is designed to assist you in using ECF. It is designed to get you using the major docketing features of the ECF system.

Topics are broken down into sections covering a docketing concept. Each section is then broken down in to the tasks then steps within the concept.

This user manual is laid out in the following format

Section and task number      Title of task

**3.1**

**Open a New Bankruptcy Case**

The majority of firms filing today use some form of bankruptcy software to open their bankruptcy cases. Because of the large number of programs, we will not look at any of them. You as a e-filer will need to look at the documentation that came with your software to see how it interacts with the ECF system.

The following procedure is the steps to take when opening a new bankruptcy case using the ECF system. You will have needed to have created all documentation prior to this and have converted it to the PDF format.

The District of Utah requires that the **Petition** and **Statement of Financial Affairs** and **Schedules** appear as separate document entries on the court docket. If you are using case opening software, the filing of the statements and schedules, creditor matrix and plan may be accomplished by the application software. If so, be sure that whatever software you are using adheres to filing requirements.

A **Statement of Social Security Number**, using form B21, is required as of 12/1/03. This docketing event can be found in the **Other** Category.

**Reference:**

- Section 1.1 Creating the Pleading
- Section 1.3 Converting a Document to PDF
- Section 1.6 Attaching a PDF Document
- Section 2.1 Searching for a Party
- Section 2.2 Creating a Party
- Section 3.X Paying Fees Over the Internet

**STEP 1** Select **Open a BK Case** from the Bankruptcy menu option.

**STEP 2** On the first screen you will select the case chapter and whether the case is a joint filing. (see Figure 1). Click [Next].

**STEP 3** You will receive the party search window. Refer to section 2.1 for searching for a party and section 2.2 for creating a party. Remember that you must create a new party because you have opened a new bankruptcy case.

**NOTE: JOINT DEBTOR:** If you have selected "Y" for the Joint Debtor, you will need to search for and create another party for the "joint debtor". Beware that there is a checkbox on the screen to select/create the joint party that refers to the previous party's address information (Figure 2). If your joint debtors co-habitat, leave the checkbox there, if they do not co-habitat, remove the check. Also remember to use **Debtor** and not **Joint Debtor**.

**STEP 4** Click Next on the page informing you of the assigned divisional office.

**STEP 5** Select the type of Debtor and fill in the remaining fields appropriately in figure 3. You will need to include a split/transfer date if either of those events occur.

**Fee Status field:** When you are filing a case in installments, you must complete an Application to Pay in Installments. Installment cases filed electronically can have only two payments on the application.

U.S. Bankruptcy Court-District of Utah      34

**Open New Bankruptcy Case**

Case type: BK  
 Date filed: 3/25/2005  
 Chapter: 7  
 Joint Position: n  
 Deficiencies: n

The District of Utah does not use the Deficiency field, so you would leave it dependent to "n".

[Next] [Clear]

**Figure 1**

**Search for a party(joint debtor)**

SSN: \_\_\_\_\_ Tax ID: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Last Business name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 [Search] [Clear]

Party search results  
 Morin, Samuel C.

Copy previous party's address  
 Select name to list     Create new party

**Figure 2**

Type of debtor:  Individual     Corporation     Partnership     Clearing Bank  
 Railroad     Stockbroker     Commodity Broker     Other

Fee status: Paid  
 Nature of debt: consumer  
 Voluntary: voluntary  
 Origin: Original  
 Date split/transfer: \_\_\_\_\_

Asset notice: No  
 Estimated number of creditors: 1-15  
 Estimated assets: \$0-\$50,000  
 Estimated debts: \$0-\$50,000

[Next] [Clear]

**Figure 3**

U.S. Bankruptcy Court-District of Utah      35

Steps to perform the tasks



## Table of Contents

<b>Section 1: An Overview of ECF</b>		<b>Section 5: Filing Documents on the ECF System (Continued)</b>	
1. Using ECF	8	11. Motion to Confirm by Consent	80
2. Navigating Thru ECF	10	12. Notice of Appearance and Request for Notice	82
<b>Section 2: Document Basics</b>		13. Notice of Endorsement	86
1. Creating the Pleading	14	14. Notice of Hearing	88
2. Creating an Electronic Order	16	15. Objections	92
3. Converting a Document to PDF	18	16. Proof of Claims	94
4. Combining PDF Documents	20	17. Proposed/Pending Orders	96
5. Extracting PDF Pages	22	18. Shorten Time v. Expedite Hearing	98
6. Attaching a PDF Document	24	19. Tax Documents	100
7. Additional Attachments	26	20. Additional Tips on Bankruptcy Events	102
8. Referencing an Existing Document	28	<b>Section 6: Creditor Maintenance</b>	
<b>Section 3: Party Records</b>		1. Creating a Creditor Matrix	106
1. Search for a Party	32	2. Uploading a Creditor Matrix	108
2. Creating a Party	34	3. Editing a Creditor Matrix	110
3. Adding a Party	36	4. Adding Creditors to an Existing Case	112
<b>Section 4: Filing a New Case</b>		5. Domestic Support Matrix	114
1. Open a New Bankruptcy Case	40	<b>Section 7: Reports/Queries</b>	
2. Case Upload	44	1. Cases Report	118
3. Open an Involuntary Case	46	2. Docket Report	120
4. Open an Adversary Case	48	3. Query	122
5. Statement of Social Security Number (B-21)	52	<b>Section 8: ECF Utilities</b>	
6 Means Test	54	1. Internet Payments Due	128
<b>Section 5: Filing Documents on the ECF System</b>		2. Internet Payment History	132
1. Add Creditors	58	3. Maintain ECF User Account	134
2. Motions	60	4. Transaction Log	136
3. Multi-Part Motions	62	5. Recipient Mailing List	138
4. Amendments	64	6. ECF Users Report	140
5. Amended Matrix & Schedules	66	<b>Appendix</b>	
6. Compensation	68	A. System Troubleshooting and Help	160
7. Conversions	72		
8. Creditor Counseling / Finance Management Training	74		
9. Electronically Paid Fees	76		
10. Employ	78		



# 1.0

## An Overview of CM/ECF

This section will cover what CM/ECF is, what software is needed and how to navigate around ECF. The section will also go over available ECF events available to registered users.

This section will list events:

1. Using ECF
2. Navigating around ECF

# 1.1

## Using ECF

The CM/ECF system is the Bankruptcy Court’s electronic case filing and management system which has been used by the District of Utah since Fall 2002. The system is designed to allow attorneys and trustees to open bankruptcy and adversary cases and file pleadings and documentation into the system, and pay for fees over the Internet. A number of advantages of the system is:

- 24 hour access to the system
- Reduced cost of delivering documentation to the court
- No 4:30 p.m. deadline to catch before the clerk’s office closes
- An overall reduced cost
- Simplified archiving and retrieval of case files



## **Internet Browsers**

ECF is designed to be used over the Internet using an Internet browser. Browsers that can be used are Internet Explorer 7.0 and Firefox 2.

## **Adobe Acrobat**

The court will only accept electronic documentation in a PDF format, with the exception of the creditor matrix, which is a text document. Adobe is the proprietary license holder for PDF or the portable document format.

Acrobat version 4 or above are acceptable programs to use to create your pdf documents for filing to ECF. Acrobat is the only way to create a PDF document from a scanned document.

It also the only way to combine and extract PDF documents (see section 2.4 & 2.5).

## **Hardware**

Because of the chance of physical documentation needing to be used within a case, the use of a scanner may become necessary. There are a number of types of scanners available on the market. If you are going to scan a large amount of documents, you may want to consider purchasing a high-speed scanner with an automatic document feeder. If you will be only scanning small amounts, a flatbed or sheet feed scanner will work.

Because of the number of documents that you will be uploading into the ECF system as well as the ECF pages you will be moving through, it is recommended that you use a high-speed connection to the Internet.

# 1.2 Navigating Through ECF

Navigating around ECF is the same as navigating through any other Internet site. You can use the browser buttons to move back and forth between pages that you have been to, as well as move through the ECF pages using the page buttons to move to a new screen. There are only a few things that you will need to remember concerning navigation.

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## Browser Navigation Buttons

You can use the browser's navigation buttons to move back and forth between pages that you have been to. This will allow you to review the pages and information that you have entered into them. The thing to remember about the browser buttons is that you can use the forward button after using the backward button **if you have not changed information on a page that you went back through**. If you enter or change information, you will then need to use the pages buttons and re-enter information as you move forward.

## ECF Menu Bar

Clicking on the ECF Menu Bar will take you to the top of the ECF Categories list for that menu. If you are filing a case or pleading and decide to start over for whatever reason, you can simply click on a Menu option to take you back to the start of that category list.

## ECF Categories

ECF Categories are hyperlinks that will take you through the process of filing that event, whether it be a new case filing, a motion or an objection. As you move through these pages, you will enter information and then click on the [Next] or [Submit] buttons to continue on to the next screen.

Information is not submitted to ECF unless you click on a [Submit] button (such as creating a new party) or when you are given the screen containing the final docket text. This page will usually contain warning text above the [Next] button warning that the filing will become finalized.

Browser Navigation Buttons

ECF Menu Bar



