CM/ECF Electronic New Civil Case Opening
Quick Reference Guide for Attorneys and Law Firm Staff
United States District Court - Southern District of New York

Selecting the **Office**: This is determined by:
- the county in which the incident occurred occasioning the law suit (If not applicable, then 2)
- the county of the residence of first listed plaintiff (If not applicable, then 3)
- the county of residence of first listed defendant

District is divided into **2 divisions**:
1. **Manhattan**
2. **White Plains**

CV must be selected as the case type.

The following cases may not be commenced on-line through the ECF system, and must be filed in the traditional manner, on paper:

- New civil actions that include an Order to Show Cause, Temporary Restraining Order, or initiating documents (cases) sought to be filed under seal;

- New civil actions commenced by a *pro se* party;

- *Habeas corpus* cases filed pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §2255 (prisoner in Federal custody);

- False Claims Act cases (*Qui Tam* or "whistleblower" cases) filed pursuant to 31 U.S.C.§3729 *et seq*;

Enter **all** the **STATISTICAL INFORMATION** necessary information on CM/ECF screens as follows.

Jurisdiction: There are five options.
1. U.S. Government Plaintiff
2. U.S. Government Defendant
3. Federal Question (system default)
4. Diversity (Citizenship fields required for both plaintiff & defendant)
5. Local Question

Cause of Action & **Nature of Suit**: Use alpha-numeric codes in the filter fields.

Origin: Select 1 (Original Proceeding) or 2 (Removal from State Court)

Citizenship plaintiff/Citizenship defendant: Complete these fields only if the Jurisdiction, selected above, was 4 (Diversity).

Jury Demand: Select the appropriate code from the drop-down list.

Class Action: Yes or No.

Demand ($000): Enter the dollar amount to the nearest thousand without punctuation

Arbitration Code: Leave blank.

County: Select the county corresponding with the Office Code selected under divisional office (previous) screen.

Fee Status:
- **fp (in forma pauperis)**: for COURT USE ONLY
- **none (no fee required)**: for US Attorney use only
- **pd (Paid)**: if being paid electronically with this filing, through pay.gov
- **pend (IFP pending)**: if submitting a motion to proceed in forma pauperis with filing

Fee Date: System generated. Do not modify.

Date Transfer: Leave blank.

ADDING PARTIES: Add parties in the exact **order** they are **listed** on the initiating document.
Use the **Party Text Manual**

Search for the party **name** and highlight the name already in the database to **prevent duplicate parties**.

If more than one party matches your search, **double-click** on the name **to display** any additional **details** for each.

Use **upper** and **lower case** letters to input names.

Do not enter any **address** information.

Modify the **party role** type to the correct role (defaults to ADR).

Verify all party information, role, and spelling **before accepting**.

Use the **icons** to **edit**, **delete**, or **add** alias, corporate parent, & other affiliate information.

A **lead event must be selected** to ensure the case is processed.

Upload the following documents in **PDF-A format** (if applicable) **in the order** listed below:
Main Document:
1. **Initiating Document** (Complaint, Notice of Removal, etc.)
Attachments:
2. **Exhibits** to Initiating Document the lead event.

ADDITIONAL TIPS:
- **Do not click** the **back button** once you begin the process.
- **Complete** the entire **process** as instructed in this Case Opening Manual.
- **Enter all** necessary **information** on the CM/ECF screens.
- **Docket** the **lead event** and **upload** all **pdf** documents **as instructed** above.
- **Enter** all necessary **information** on the **pay.gov** screens.
- **Do not** attempt to **open** the same **case twice**.
- Refer to the **CM/ECF Electronic New Civil Case Opening Manual** for additional details.

If you have any questions or need assistance during the case opening process, please contact the Help Desk at 212-805-0136, Option # 2.