

U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims

CM/ECF Frequently Asked Questions

The following are frequently asked questions that other courts have experienced while implementing E filing. If you have any other questions, please e-mail the Court and we'll try to answer your questions in a timely manner.

Questions:

1. What is CM/ECF?

In January 1996, the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts began development of the Case Management/Electronic Case Filing (CM/ECF) system. CM/ECF is a comprehensive case management system that will allow courts to maintain electronic case files and offer electronic filing over the Internet. Courts can make all case information immediately available electronically through the Internet. Eventually, CM/ECF will replace the current case management systems used by the federal courts across the country. The US Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims is implementing the Pilot Program for the Court's E filing System beginning November 27, 2007, and all new EAJA cases must be electronically filed. The projected date for the full implementation of E filing is Summer 2008.

2. Why Electronic Case Files?

Judges, court staff, and the public now have the capability to access electronic docket information, case management data and legal research materials. As most documents are now initially created first in electronic form, the federal courts can further reduce the reliance on paper records by establishing electronic case file systems. These systems should enhance the accuracy, management and security of records, reduce delays in the flow of information and achieve cost savings for the judiciary, the bar and litigants.

3. What are the benefits and features of using CM/ECF?

There are a number of significant benefits and features:

- Courts can allow registered attorneys to file documents 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Reduction of paper, photocopy, postage and courier costs.
- Full case information is available immediately to attorneys, parties, and the general public through the Internet. This includes the ability to view the full text of all filed documents.
- Attorneys on the system will receive email notices electronically in CM/ECF cases. This greatly speeds delivery and eliminates the costs to both the court and attorneys of handling and mailing paper notices.
- Multiple parties can view the same case files simultaneously.
- Since CM/ECF uses Internet standard software, the out-of-pocket cost of participation for attorneys is typically very low.

4. What is the cost for using CM/ECF?

There is no additional fee associated with the filing aspect of the CM/ECF system.

5. Who developed CM/ECF?

Case Management/Electronic Case Filing (CM/ECF) for the project has been developed by the Administrative Office of the United States Courts.

6. How will I register to be a filer?

A CM/ECF password and login will be required to file in CM/ECF. All CM/ECF registration will be handled by this Court. In order to register for an account, the [training](#) for e-filing must be completed and then the [Registration form](#) must be completed and e-mailed to the Court. The form will be used to verify items such as phone numbers and current e-mail address.

7. Will CM/ECF be mandatory for the CAVC?

Yes. Use of the CM/ECF system for filing will be mandatory for attorney filers.

8. Must I register before I can file through CM/ECF?

Yes. You cannot file through CM/ECF until you register and the court approves you as a filer.

9. How long will it take to register for CM/ECF?

The actual time for on-line registration is less than 20 minutes. The whole CM/ECF registration will usually be completed in a few hours. In exceptional situations it may take a day. When your registration is complete, you will receive an email from the Court confirming your registration. If you have an emergency and need to file immediately, contact the Clerk's Office Helpline for assistance and directions.

10. What equipment and software will I need for filing in CM/ECF?

- You will need a PC or a Mac
- A good internet connection
- A browser (Internet Explorer 6 or higher)
- Adobe Writer (not Adobe Reader)
- and Java Version 6 or higher

Please note that your computer equipment must have Java installed. If you do not have Java on your computer (or if you aren't sure if you do) go to <http://www.java.com>. Simply click the "Free Java Download" button and follow the directions on the subsequent pages. The Java Version 6 download is free, and the program takes only a few minutes to load. The Adobe Writer Software will enable all documents created in a Word Processing software such as WordPerfect or Microsoft Word to be converted to a Native PDF document for submission to the Court. Please consult with your IT Professional if you have any questions.

11. Will there be any special training or bar membership requirements in order to register and file in CM/ECF?

Yes. You must be a member of the CAVC's bar in order to register or file a document in a case. There will be a mandatory training module that must be completed before you will be allowed to file.

12. Will there be any charge to register or use CM/ECF?

No. There is no charge to register or to make a CM/ECF filing.

13. When will the CM/CF system be available?

The Court is currently targeting a November date for the Pilot Program and then a full implementation of the CM/ECF System in mid-Summer 2008. The system will be available (except for routine or emergency maintenance), and you should be able to file anytime. Please note that routine maintenance will be established by this Court and that information will be posted once it has been finalized. It is anticipated that all filings completed before midnight Eastern Standard Time (with DST Considerations) to be entered on the docket that day. Please note that filings received on Saturday, Sunday or a federal holiday will be considered filed on the next business day. If you experience difficulties, please contact the clerk's office helpline during normal business hours.

14. What help will be available for CM/ECF and its usage?

The Court is in the process of developing a series of online electronic training modules for the appellate version of CM/ECF. The modules will include an introduction to CM/ECF, information on Docket reports, and specific instructions on how to file an appearance, a motion and a response/reply. The Training Modules will be available on the Court's website once they are finalized. You can also contact the clerk's office for assistance with filing.

15. Is there a list of Docketing Events and Categories available?

Yes. The list of [Events](#) and Categories are available on the Court's website.

16. Will I need to send the clerk a paper copy of a document filed through CM/ECF?

No. E Filing is intended to eliminate paper filings.

17. What is a Notice of Docket Activity?

A Notice of Docket Activity will be an email notice that will be generated when a docket transaction is docketed that requires that notice be sent to attorneys, case participants or court personnel. Notices of Docket Activity will be generated when a party or attorney files a document with the clerk's office or when the court enters an order or takes other public actions in a case. If you are a CM/ECF participant, your receipt of the Notice of Docket Activity will be considered service of that document or order, and registration for the CM/ECF system constitutes consent to receive service through the Notice of Docket Activity. Generally, a Notice of Docket Activity contains a hyperlink back to court's docket sheet and the document in question. When parties receive a Notice of Docket Activity they can click on the document and view the activity and any documents related to that activity.

18. Is "/s/" acceptable for electronic filings?

Yes. Please list the names of all signatories by means of an "/s/" typed name for each signatory. You must also maintain a signed copy of the filed document until the appellate process is completed in the case.

19. How do I start receiving e-mail notices from CM/ECF?

You will start receiving e-mail notices from CM/ECF once you have received your CM/ECF login and password and have been added as a participant to a new EAJA case.

20. How do I get Help?

You may email the Court at efiling@vetapp.gov or call (202) 418-FILE (3453)