

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO



CIVIL CASE OPENING BY ATTORNEYS

June 1, 2006
(Rev. 4/13/07)

Effective June 1, 2006, attorneys can open their own civil cases and file the initial

document/pleading if . . .

- (1) You will pay the required filing fee with a credit card over the internet;
- (2) the case is being filed in forma pauperis; or
- (3) the filing fee is waived.

You **must** complete the **entire** process. You will open the new civil case **and** file your initial document/pleading. Do **not** attempt to open the same case twice. **Never** hit the back button once you begin the process.

Required attachments to your initial document:

- ★ **You must attach the civil cover sheet. If applicable, the summonses and US Marshal forms should be attachments to. You can upload all of the summonses as one attachment and all of the US Marshal forms as one attachment your initiating pleading.**

If you file the initial document with an accompanying Motion to Proceed Informa Pauperis, you must file the Motion/Application to proceed in forma pauperis as a separate document using the appropriate motion event.

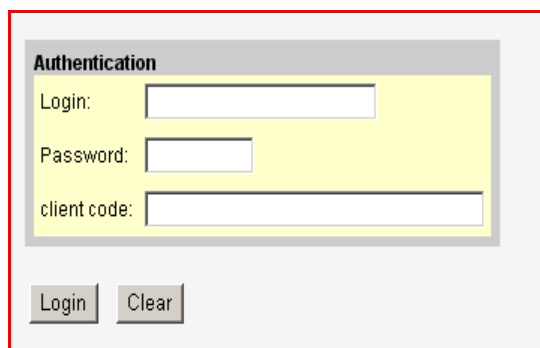
The clerk's office will issue summonses electronically.

Very Important. You must change your print setting in Adobe to **document and stamps** in order for the court seal and signature to appear. If it is set to **document** or **document and markups**, the stamp will not appear on the printed copy.

The following instructions will walk you through the entire process.

1. LOG INTO CM/ECF

- Log into CM/ECF with your CM /ECF login and password.



The image shows a screenshot of a web-based authentication form titled "Authentication". The form has a yellow background and is enclosed in a red border. It contains three input fields: "Login:", "Password:", and "client code:". Below the input fields are two buttons: "Login" and "Clear".

- Click on *Civil*.

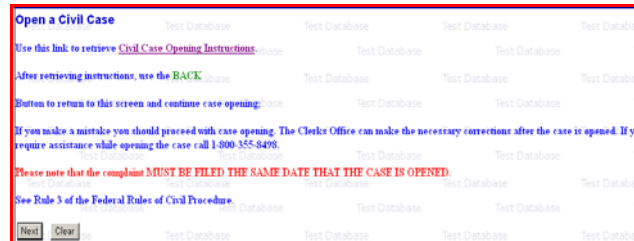


2. OPEN A NEW CIVIL CASE

- Click on *Open a Civil Case*.

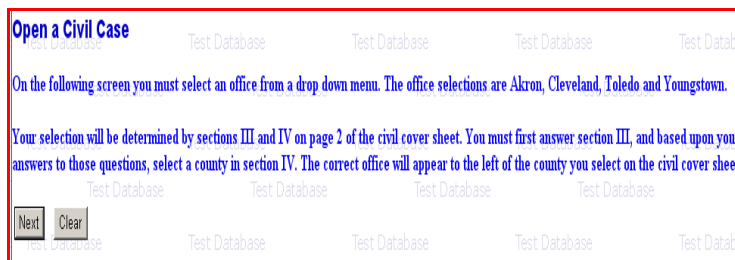


- Click the [Next] button.



Please read the important message regarding the office selection.

- Click the [Next] button.



The Open a

Civil Case

screen appears and displays initial case filing information.

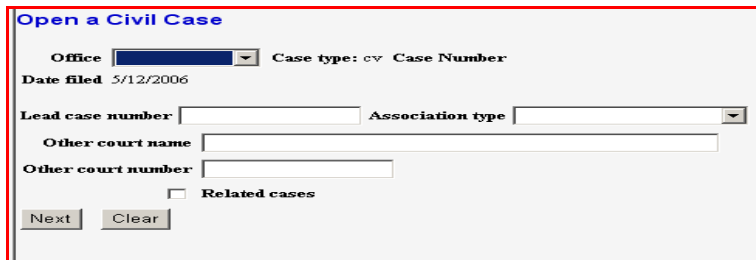
Select the office by clicking the pull down arrow.

You must select the correct office based on the county you are filing your new civil case under. The office selections are Akron, Cleveland, Toledo and Youngstown. You will decide your selection by sections III and IV on page 2 of the civil cover sheet. You must first answer section III, and based upon your answers to those questions, select a county in section IV. The correct office will appear to the left of the county you select the civil cover sheet.

The Case type field is set at “cv” which represents a civil case.

Do not select any of the other options on this screen unless you are filing a Notice of Removal. In that case enter the county court’s name in the Other court name field and the county case number in the Other court number field.

- Click the [Next] button.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Open a Civil Case". It contains the following elements: "Office" with a dropdown arrow, "Case type: cv", "Case Number" field, "Date filed: 5/12/2006", "Lead case number" field, "Association type" with a dropdown arrow, "Other court name" field, "Other court number" field, a checkbox labeled "Related cases", and "Next" and "Clear" buttons.

Enter the Civil Cover Sheet (JS-44) Information

A new screen appears and displays multiple fields to enter new case information typically found on the civil cover sheet (JS-44). Select from the options displayed from the pull down arrows or fill in the necessary fields.

You must select from the drop down boxes the:

- jury demand
- whether the case is a class action
- the county you are filing the case under
- the fee status (defaults to paid, but you should select waived, IFP if applicable).
- You should also enter your demand dollar amount.
- Click the [Next] button.

Open a Civil Case

Jurisdiction: 3 (Federal Question)

Cause of action: 0 (No cause code entered)

Nature of suit: 0 (zero)

Origin: 1 (Original Proceeding)

Citizenship plaintiff: [Empty]

Citizenship defendant: [Empty]

Jury demand: n (None) Class action: n Demand (\$000): [Empty]

Arbitration code: [Empty] County: Allen

Fee status: pd (paid) Fee date: 5/12/2006 Date transfer: [Empty]

Next Clear

Please Note: The system will verify the accuracy of combinations entered on this screen. For example, if an invalid Nature of Suit and Jurisdiction combination is selected, a screen will appear stating:

Invalid Nature of Suit/Jurisdiction combination [440/4]. Valid Jurisdiction code(s) for Nature of Suit [440] are [1,2,3]

If you receive this error message, click [OK] and select valid combinations as indicated.

Add/Create New Party (Standard Party Guidelines attached as Appendix A)

The next screen that appears is the party search screen. The screen will allow you to enter all of the parties to the case. It is very important that you add the party names in the exact order they are listed the complaint. First, you must do a search to see if the party has already been entered into the CM/ECF party data base.

In the *Last/Business name field*, type the first few letters of the last name of the individual, or the business name of the party you wish to add.
 Click the [Search] button.
 After you click the search button, the system will look for any matches to your party name entry. If a match is found, the results will display in a new window (right).

Open a Civil Case

Search for a party

Search for a party

Last/Business name: [Empty]

Search Clear

Party search results

John Doe Manufacturer and/or Handler
 John Does 1-100
 Johns, Robert William
 Johnson, Howard
 Johnson, John Joseph, Jr
 Jones, Charlie

Select name from list Create new party

Scroll down the list of names to search for the party

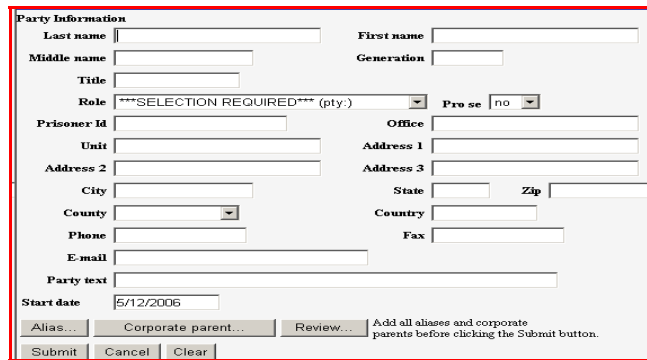
to your case. If you find a name that exactly matches the party to your case, click on it and then click the [Select name from list] button. If you do not find a name that matches the party to your case, click the [Create new party] button.

The [Next] screen that displays will allow you to enter party specific information. Enter the **Party name** (if you selected Create new party), **Role** and **Party text**. Enter the entire company name in the Last name field. Choose the **party role** (i.e., Plaintiff, Defendant) from the pull-down list. **Party text** is also an option field that can be used to enter additional descriptive party information. For example, if a company name is added, party text might be "An Ohio corporation."

To add an **alias or corporate parent** to the party in the case, simply click the [Alias] button or the [Corporate parent] button at the bottom of the screen.

Do not add address information for the party.

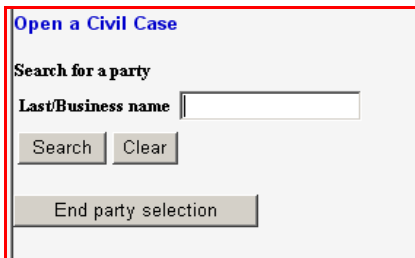
Click the [Submit] button.



The screenshot shows a form titled "Party Information" with various input fields. The fields include: Last name, First name, Middle name, Generation, Title, Role (with a dropdown menu showing "***SELECTION REQUIRED*** (pty.)"), Prisoner Id, Office, Unit, Address 1, Address 2, Address 3, City, State, Zip, Country, Phone, Fax, E-mail, Party text, and Start date (with a date picker showing 5/12/2006). At the bottom, there are buttons for "Alias...", "Corporate parent...", "Review...", "Submit", "Cancel", and "Clear". A note next to the "Review..." button says "Add all aliases and corporate parents before clicking the Submit button."

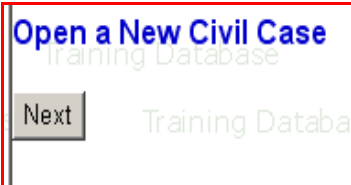
A new party screen will display to allow you to do another party name search in the system.

- Once you have entered all the parties to your case, click the [End party selection] button.



The screenshot shows a screen titled "Open a Civil Case" with a search section. It includes a "Search for a party" label, a "Last/Business name" input field, and "Search" and "Clear" buttons. Below the search section is an "End party selection" button.

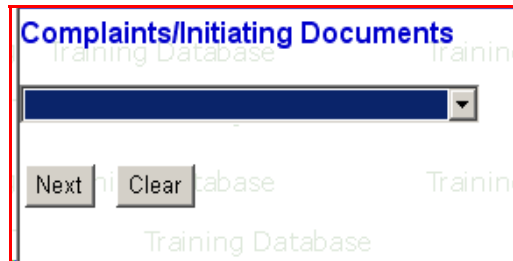
- Click the  [Next] button.



The screenshot shows a button labeled "Open a New Civil Case" in blue text. Below it is a "Next" button. The background of the button area has a faint "Training Database" watermark.

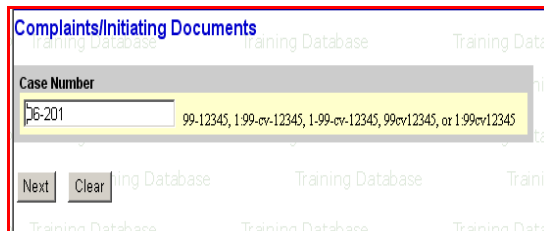
3. FILE THE INITIATING DOCUMENT/PLEADING

- Highlight the name of the document you are filing from the drop down box.
- Click the [Next] button.



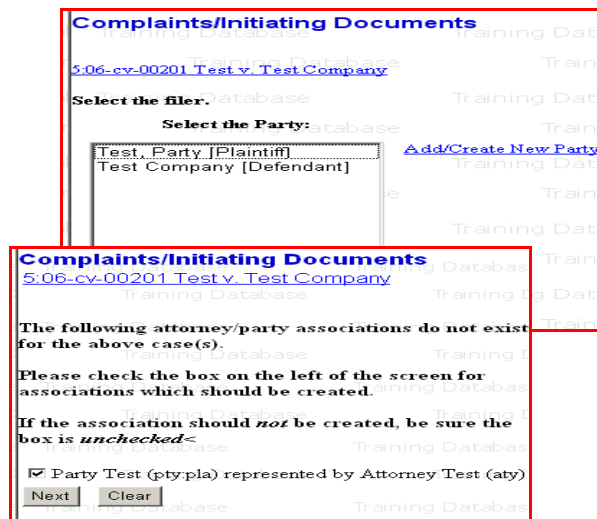
The assigned case number appears in the Case Number box.

- Click the [Next] button.



Highlight the party filing the complaint (If there is more than one party filer, you would click the names while pressing down the Control key)

- Click the [Next] button.

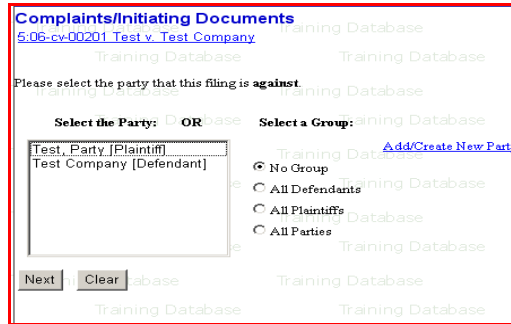


button.

Click the [Next]

Highlight the party that this filing is against (If there is more than one defendant, you would click the names while pressing down the Control key).

- Click the [Next] button.



You have converted the initial pleading (complaint, notice of removal, etc.) into portable document format (PDF) before logging into CM/ECF. To tell CM/ECF where the document is found on your computer, you have to type in the exact file path and the document.

BEST PRACTICES:

To avoid the chance of error, the best practice is to use the browse button to select the file.

- Click the [Browse] button to find the PDF document on your computer.
- Clicking the [Browse] button takes you to your local hard drive or network server.

Create a folder for your District Court case files. Use a naming scheme for each of your cases that helps you identify the contents of the folder.

- Find your pdf document (initial pleading) and right click to open the document. Make sure this is the document you want to file.
- Close your document and click on Open (the file name will appear in the file name box).
- Click Yes for attachments.
- Click the [Next] button.

Complaints/Initiating Documents
[5:06-cv-00201 Test v. Test Company](#)

Remember to upload the CIVIL COVER SHEET and any other required documents as attachments to the complaint.

Select the pdf document (for example: CM199cv501-21.pdf).

Filename

Attachments to Document: No Yes

- Click the [Browse] button.
- Click the *Category* drop down menu and highlight the correct document you are attaching. (If nothing matches what you are filing, text in the descriptive wording in the *Description* text box.)

You must add any exhibits as attachments to the complaint and the civil cover sheet, summons(es), and USM 285 form, if applicable. Making the summonses separate attachments is not necessary.

- Click the [Add to List] button
- Click the [Next] button

Complaints/Initiating Documents
[5:06-cv-00201 Test v. Test Company](#)

Select one or more attachments.

1) Enter the pdf document that contains attachment (for example: C:\appendix.pdf).

Filename

2) At your option, select a document category, enter a description, and select a type.

Category	Description
Civil Cover Sheet	<input type="text"/>

3) Add the filename to the list box below. If you have more attachments, go back to Step 1. When the list of filenames is complete, click on the Next button.

Please Note: If you have more than one attachment, the system will loop you around to add another attachment to your filing.

If filing your complaint in forma pauperis do **not** attach the motion/application to proceed in forma pauperis to the complaint. You must file it as a separate document using the appropriate motion event.

Filing Fee Screens

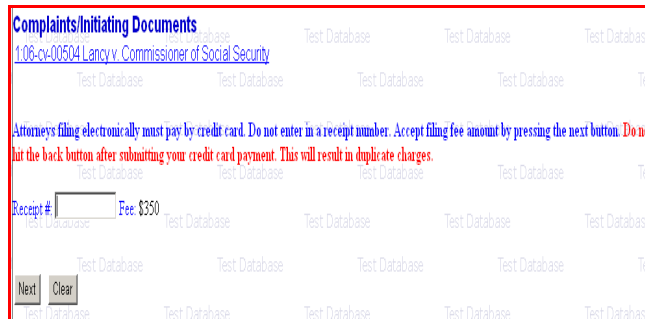
If filing in forma pauperis or if exempt from the filing fee, answer Y to the following question. (The screen will default to N)

Filers answering Y will bypass all payment screens.



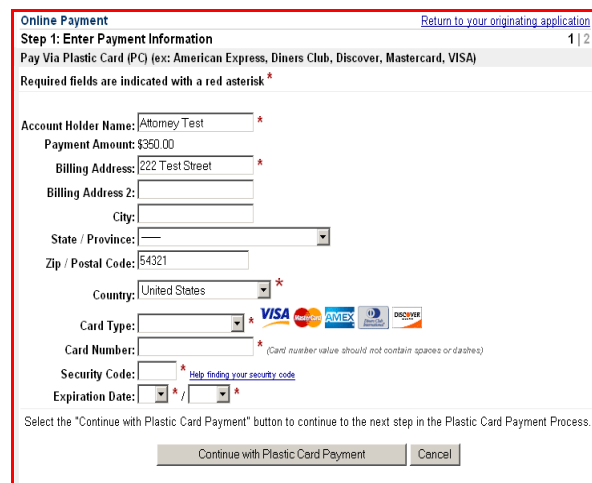
Filers answering N will get the next screen. The screen is for use by the Clerk's Office in filing complaints which were submitted on paper and paid by check or cash. You can only file complaints electronically if the fee is paid by credit card while filing. The fee cannot be paid before filing electronically. Therefore, there will be no receipt number to enter.

- Click the [Next] button.



The following screen will appear. Filer cannot proceed without paying by credit card.

- Fill in required information
- Click [Continue with Plastic Card Payment] button.



- Enter your email address if you wish to have confirmation sent to you upon completion of this transaction.
- Check the box authorizing a charge to your card account.
- Click the [Submit Payment] button.

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: Attorney Test Billing Address: 222 Test Street Billing Address 2: City: State / Province: Zip / Postal Code: 54321 Country: USA	Card Type: Visa Card Number: *****1111 Expiration Date: 2 / 2009	Payment Amount: \$350.00 Transaction Date: 05/02/2006 13:57 and Time: 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:

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.

Very Important: Do not use the back button after entering credit card information. You will not be able to complete the transaction without entering the credit card information a second time, and a second charge will occur.

Payment will be processed and you will then receive the following screen. The receipt number appearing in the docket text is generated by Pay.gov.

- Enter any additional language in the text box, if appropriate.
- Click the [Next] button

Complaints/Initiating Documents

[5:06-cv-00201 Test v. Test Company](#) Training Database Training Database Training Database

Training Database Training Database Training Database Training Database

Docket Text: Modify as Appropriate.

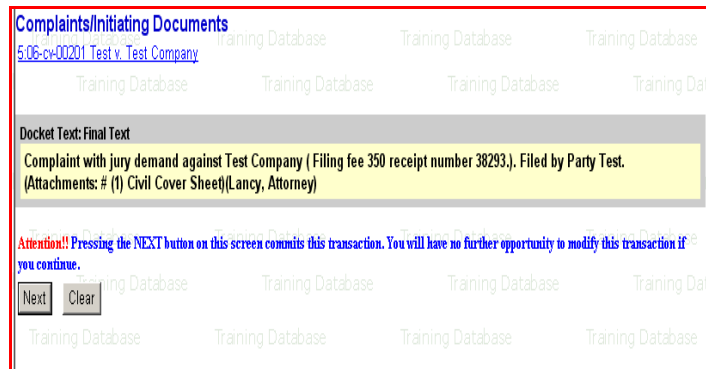
Complaint with jury demand against Test Company (Filing fee 350 receipt number 38293.). Filed by Party Test. (Attachments: # (1) Civil Cover Sheet)(Lancy, Attorney)

Training Database Training Database Training Database Training Database

Training Database Training Database Training Database Training Database

CM/ECF presents the final version of the docket text to you.

- Click the [Next] button if everything is correct.



CM/ECF issues the receipt confirming that the entry has been received.



If applicable, file additional documents with the appropriate events. (i.e., Motion/Application to proceed in forma pauperis, Motion for temporary restraining order, Corporate Disclosure Statement.)

Please note: If an emergency filing is included with your new case filed after normal business hours, please refer to Local Rule 77.1 on how to proceed.

Clerk's Office staff will receive electronic notification of the filing and will assign a Judge and a Magistrate Judge. An electronic notice will be issued to the attorney notifying them of the judge assigned to your case.

Clerk's Office staff will issue the summons and return them to the attorney electronically.

Please Note: If service by the clerk has been requested, counsel will need to follow the steps outlined in Local Rule 4.2

APPENDIX A
STANDARD PARTY GUIDELINES

If unsure on how to enter a party name, please contact the clerk's office for guidance.

1. Omit the word "The".

Examples:

The Enrich Company, Inc.

Last Name: Enrich Company, Inc.

The City of Toledo

Last Name: City of Toledo

2. Social Security Cases. Always enter party name as Commissioner of Social Security.

Examples:

Department of Health and Human Services

Jo Ann B. Barnhart, Commissioner of Social Security

Social Security Commissioner

Secretary of Health and Human Services

Last Name Field: Commissioner of Social Security

3. John Does. If complaint includes numerous John Does add as one party name. Never add the numbers, letters or roman numerals to the party name, always add as party text.

Examples:

John Doe I-X

Last Name Field: Doe

First Name Field: John

Party Text: I-X

John Doe Police Officers 1-10

Last Name Field: Doe

First Name Field: John

Party Text: Police Officers 1-10

4. Estates

Example: *The Estate of James P. Sentinel by Joseph Smith*

Last Name Field: Smith
First Name Field: Joseph
Party Text Field: Executor of the Estate of

Create Alias:

Last Name Field: Sentinel
First Name Field: James
Middle Name Field: P.
Alias Code: dec

5. Individuals with Titles

Example:

James S. Haviland, Warden of Allen Correctional Institution

Last Name Field: Haviland
First Name Field: James
Middle Name Field: S.
Party Text Field: Warden of Allen Correctional Institution

6. Unknown Names

Example:

Unknown Spouse of Kenneth M. Keller, If any

Last Name Field: Unknown Spouse, if any, of Kenneth M. Keller

7. Union Names

Example:

Building Laborers Local 310 Pension Fund

Last Name Field: Local 310 Building Laborers Pension Fund