

***UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS***

***CM-ECF TRAINING GUIDE  
for CREDITORS***



Honorable Bill Parker, Chief Judge  
Honorable Brenda T. Rhoades, U.S. Bankruptcy Judge

Jeanne Henderson, Clerk of Court

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## **I. GETTING STARTED**

### **A. Introduction**

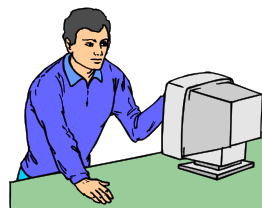
As a creditor, only limited access is available to file documents electronically using CM-ECF. Currently, a different function exists for each of the seven allowable documents. They are:

- Claims
- Creditor's Notice of Transfer/Assignment of Claim
- Creditor's Withdrawal of Claim
- Document Withdrawal
- Application For Payment of Dividend From Unclaimed Funds
- Reaffirmation Agreement
- Request for Notices By Creditor

Though access to the entire system of CM-ECF is denied, there are no practical limitations to the creditor seeking to do business with the Court. The following manual assumes all the necessary preparation, i.e., possession of the required hardware/software, knowledge of local rules and general internet functionality exist. All creditors are encouraged to use this manual in conjunction with the other tools available on our website. Changes, announcements and additional tools will be added to our website periodically. It is understood that you may file with multiple courts throughout the country, nevertheless, we expect the creditor to keep abreast of any procedural changes. This can be accomplished by a systematic approach to the use of information found online.

### **B. The 12 Step Program**

1. Create Pleading
2. Print to PDF File
3. Log In
4. Case Type (BK or AP - Main Menu)
5. Sub-Menu Categories
6. Case Number / Event Listing
7. Parties
8. PDF's
9. Related Documents (if necessary)
10. Modify/Confirm Docket Text
11. Final Review
12. Notice of Electronic Filing



### **C. The New Paradigm**

Virtually everyone doing business with the Court is in the process of overcoming their addiction to paper. Paper and the oh so significant ink signature making it “legal” have been with us for a long time. The thought of replacing paper solely with electronic images is akin to learning to read from the right to the left. It simply isn’t natural! Yet, as we continue into the 21<sup>st</sup> century the internet is playing a more significant role throughout the business world and governmental agencies at all levels. Our own studies show a strict adherence to the above 12 step program for 12 weeks will free anyone, regardless of the depth of one’s addiction.

♪ **Note:** Everything created and submitted to the Court will follow the steps above.

♪ **Note:** The storage capacity for data of one CD-ROM is equivalent to 50,000 sheets of paper.

## II. STEP BY STEP PROCEDURES

### A. Filing a Claim

#### Repeat Steps 1-5.

1. Create Pleading
2. Print to PDF
3. Log in to System
4. Select Bankruptcy from Main Menu
5. Select "File a Claim" from Sub-Category Menu

Step 6-7 (**Parties**) Insert the case number and the name of the creditor on the Search for Creditor screen. Accept the default for [Type of Creditor]. Click [Next]. If the creditor is already a party in the case it will appear highlighted. Click [Next]. If the creditor is not in the case, click [Add Creditor]. On the next screen click [Next]. Insert the name and address information into the proper fields. Change the radio button from Continue to Enter to Last Entry. Click [Next] Click [Submit] on the Adding Creditors screen. The screen should read, "Total Creditors Entered 1". Click File a Proof of Claim on the following screen.

🎵 **Note:** Failure to select [Last Entry] will bring up a blank screen upon clicking [Next]. Click [Back], make the proper change and click [Next].

You must search for the creditor again. Click [Next]. The creditor will appear highlighted on the next screen. Click [Next].

Insert the necessary figures. Do not use \$ signs or commas. Bypass the Late and Status fields. The Remarks and Description fields may be used but are rarely needed. Click [next].

🎵 **Note:** A pdf containing the proof of claim will still need to be filed.

(Step 8) **PDFs** Find and insert the pdf into the empty field. If filing an attachment change the No to Yes and click [Next]. On the following screen, the filer will be prompted to browse for the pdf, choose the type or use the description field to identify the attachment, and then add to the list. This is identical to the process of attaching a proposed order to a motion. Click [Next].

🎵 **Note:** Steps 9,10,11 to not apply.

(Step 12) **Notice of Electronic Filing** Think of this as a file-marked copy in the "electronic world". You must decide how to save this image, i.e., as a pdf, text document, simply print a hard copy.

## **B. Filing A Notice of Transfer / Assignment of Claim**

### **Repeat Steps 1-5.**

1. Create Pleading
2. Print to PDF
3. Log in to System
4. Select Bankruptcy from Main Menu
5. Select "Creditor" from Sub-Category Menu

Step 6 (**Case Number**) Enter case number and click [Next]. Select Notice of Transfer/Assignment of Claim and click [Next].

Step 7 (**Parties**) If creditor is a party in the case, highlight the name and click [Next]. Proceed to step 8. If the creditor is not a party in the case, click [Add/Create New Party]. On the next screen search for the party by inserting the desired name and click [Search]. On the next screen click [Create New Party]. Insert name and address information. It is not necessary to fill in the County, Country, Phone, or Fax number fields. **REMEMBER TO CHANGE THE ROLE FROM DEBTOR TO CREDITOR.** Otherwise, the filer will be prompted to insert a county code for the debtor. Click [OK] and change the role to [Creditor]. The party just added will appear highlighted on the next screen. Click [Next].

Step 8 (**PDFs**) Find and insert the pdf into the empty field. If filing an attachment change the No to Yes and click [Next]. On the following screen, the filer will be prompted to browse for the pdf, choose the type or use the description field to identify the attachment, and then add to the list. This is identical to the process of attaching a proposed order to a motion. Click [Next]

On the following screen insert the necessary data: Transfer type, By Whom, To Whom, and the Claim Number. Click [Next].

### **Step 9 does not apply**

Step 10 (**Modify/Confirm Docket Text**) Check the accuracy of text. Click [Next].

Step 11 (**Final Review**) Last chance to abort transaction. Click [Next].

Step 12 (**Notice of Electronic Filing**) Think of this as a file-marked copy in the "electronic world". You must decide how to save this image, i.e., as a pdf, text document, or simply print a hard copy.

## C. Filing A Withdrawal of Claim

### Repeat Steps 1-5.

1. Create Pleading
2. Print to PDF
3. Log in to System
4. Select Bankruptcy from Main Menu
5. Select “Creditor” from Sub-Category Menu

Step 6 (**Case Number**) Enter case number and click [Next]. Select Withdrawal of Claim Click [Next].

Step 7 (**Parties**) If creditor is a party in the case, highlight the name and click [Next]. Proceed to step 8. If the creditor is not a party in the case, click [Add/Create New Party]. On the next screen search for the party by inserting the desired name and click [Search]. On the next screen click [Create New Party]. Insert name and address information. It is not necessary to fill in the County, Country, Phone, or Fax number fields. **REMEMBER TO CHANGE THE ROLE FROM DEBTOR TO CREDITOR.** Otherwise, the filer will be prompted to insert a county code for the debtor. Click [OK] and change the role to [Creditor]. The party just added will appear highlighted on the next screen. Click [Next].

Step 8 (**PDFs**) Find and insert the pdf into the empty field. If filing an attachment change the No to Yes and click [Next]. On the following screen, the filer will be prompted to browse for the pdf, choose the type or use the description field to identify the attachment, and then add to the list. This is identical to the process of attaching a proposed order to a motion. Click [Next]

Step 9 (**Related Documents**) Do not check the box to the left of the question ,“Refer to Existing Event(s). Enter the amount to the claim and click [Next].

Step 10 (**Modify/Confirm Docket Text**) Check the accuracy of text. Click [Next].

Step 11 (**Final Review**) Last chance to abort transaction. Click [Next].

Step 12 (**Notice of Electronic Filing**) Think of this as a file-marked copy in the “electronic world”. You must decide how to save this image, i.e., as a pdf, text document, or simply print a hard copy.

## D. Filing A Document Withdrawal

### Repeat Steps 1-5.

1. Create Pleading
2. Print to PDF
3. Log in to System
4. Select Bankruptcy from Main Menu
5. Select "Creditor" from Sub-Category Menu

Step 6 (**Case Number**) Enter case number and click [Next]. Select Document Withdrawal. Click [Next].

Step 7 (**Parties**) Select the appropriate party. Click [Next].

Step 8 (**PDFs**) Find and insert the pdf into the empty field. If filing an attachment change the No to Yes and click [Next]. On the following screen, the filer will be prompted to browse for the pdf, choose the type or use the description field to identify the attachment, and then add to the list. This is identical to the process of attaching a proposed order to a motion. Click [Next]

Step 9 (**Related Documents**) Check the box to the left of the question, "Refer to Existing Event(s). On the following screen select the category to which your event relates, i.e., motion, notice, etc. On the next screen a list of documents will appear matching the category selected. Check the box to the left of the desired document. Click [Next].

Step 10 (**Modify/Confirm Docket Text**) Check the accuracy of text. The related text will appear in green. Click [Next].

Step 11 (**Final Review**) Last chance to abort transaction. Click [Next].

Step 12 (**Notice of Electronic Filing**) Think of this as a file-marked copy in the "electronic world". You must decide how to save this image, i.e., as a pdf, text document, or simply print a hard copy.

## **E. Filing An Application For Payment Of Dividend From Unclaimed Funds**

### **Repeat Steps 1-5.**

1. Create Pleading
2. Print to PDF
3. Log in to System
4. Select Bankruptcy from Main Menu
5. Select “Creditor” from Sub-Category Menu

**Step 6 (Case Number)** Enter case number and click [Next]. Select Unclaimed Funds (For Payment of Dividend From). Click [Next].

**Step 7 (Parties)** If creditor is a party in the case, highlight the name and click [Next]. Proceed to step 8. If the creditor is not a party in the case, click [Add/Create New Party]. On the next screen search for the party by inserting the desired name and click [Search]. On the next screen click [Create New Party]. Insert name and address information. It is not necessary to fill in the County, Country, Phone, or Fax number fields. **REMEMBER TO CHANGE THE ROLE FROM DEBTOR TO CREDITOR.** Otherwise, the filer will be prompted to insert a county code for the debtor. Click [OK] and change the role to [Creditor]. The party just added will appear highlighted on the next screen. Click [Next].

**Step 8 (PDFs)** Find and insert the pdf into the empty field. Change the No to Yes to the statement, “Attachments to Documents” and click [Next]. On the following screen, the filer will be prompted to browse for the pdf, choose the type or use the description field to identify the attachment, and then add to the list. Click [Next]. On the following screen enter the unclaimed fund amount and click [Next].

### **Step 9 does not apply**

**Step 10 (Modify/Confirm Docket Text)** Check the accuracy of text. Click [Next].

**Step 11 (Final Review)** Last chance to abort transaction. Click [Next].

**Step 12 (Notice of Electronic Filing)** Think of this as a file-marked copy in the “electronic world”. You must decide how to save this image, i.e., as a pdf, text document, or simply print a hard copy.

## F. Filing A Reaffirmation Agreement

### Repeat Steps 1-5.

1. Create Pleading
2. Print to PDF
3. Log in to System
4. Select Bankruptcy from Main Menu
5. Select "Creditor" from Sub-Category Menu

Step 6 (**Case Number**) Enter case number and click [Next]. Select Reaffirmation Agreement. Click [Next].

Step 7 (**Parties**) If creditor is a party in the case, highlight the name and click [Next]. Proceed to step 8. If the creditor is not a party in the case, click [Add/Create New Party]. On the next screen search for the party by inserting the desired name and click [Search]. On the next screen click [Create New Party]. Insert name and address information. It is not necessary to fill in the County, Country, Phone, or Fax number fields. **REMEMBER TO CHANGE THE ROLE FROM DEBTOR TO CREDITOR.** Otherwise, the filer will be prompted to insert a county code for the debtor. Click [OK] and change the role to [Creditor]. The party just added will appear highlighted on the next screen. Click [Next].

Step 8 (**PDFs**) Find and insert the pdf into the empty field. If filing an attachment change the No to Yes and click [Next]. On the following screen, the filer will be prompted to browse for the pdf, choose the type or use the description field to identify the attachment, and then add to the list. This is identical to the process of attaching a proposed order to a motion. Click [Next]. Enter Creditor Name and click [Next]. Click [Next] again.

**Step 9 does not apply**

**Step 10 does not apply**

Step 11 (**Final Review**) Last chance to abort transaction. Click [Next].

Step 12 (**Notice of Electronic Filing**) Think of this as a file-marked copy in the "electronic world". You must decide how to save this image, i.e., as a pdf, text document, or simply print a hard copy.

## **G. Filing a Request for Notice by Creditors**

### **Repeat Steps 1-5.**

1. Create Pleading
2. Print to PDF
3. Log in to System
4. Select Bankruptcy from Main Menu
5. Select "Creditor" from Sub-Category Menu

**Step 6 (Case Number)** Enter case number and click [Next]. Select Request for Notices by Creditors and click [Next].

**Step 7 (Parties)** If creditor is a party in the case, highlight the name and click [Next]. Proceed to step 8. If the creditor is not a party in the case, click [Add/Create New Party]. On the next screen search for the party by inserting the desired name and click [Search]. On the next screen click [Create New Party]. Insert name and address information. It is not necessary to fill in the County, Country, Phone, or Fax number fields. **REMEMBER TO CHANGE THE ROLE FROM DEBTOR TO CREDITOR.** Otherwise, the filer will be prompted to insert a county code for the debtor. Click [OK] and change the role to [Creditor]. The party just added will appear highlighted on the next screen. Click [Next].

**Step 8 (PDFs)** Find and insert the pdf into the empty field. If filing an attachment change the No to Yes and click [Next]. On the following screen, the filer will be prompted to browse for the pdf, choose the type or use the description field to identify the attachment, and then add to the list. This is identical to the process of attaching a proposed order to a motion. Click [Next].

### **Step 9 does not apply**

**Step 10 (Modify/Confirm Docket Text)** Check the accuracy of text. Click [Next].

**Step 11 (Final Review)** Last chance to abort transaction. Click [Next].

**Step 12 (Notice of Electronic Filing)** Think of this as a file-marked copy in the "electronic world". You must decide how to save this image, i.e., as a pdf, text document, or simply print a hard copy.

### III. HELPFUL HINTS

1. When in doubt, call the clerk's office before proceeding; that will save you and us time.
2. Check our website on a regular basis for updates, announcements, and useful resources.
3. Maintain a working knowledge of the Federal and Local Rules of Procedure for Bankruptcy Law.
4. Click on the yellow ? in the upper right hand corner for helpful information at any time. The information will only pertain to that screen.
5. Use the control f function to search for key words or phrases in large docket reports.
6. To minimize browser malfunctions, click Tools, Internet Options, Delete Cookies, Delete Files on a regular basis. This will prevent various menu selections from being eliminated from a given screen. Click the Settings bar and set it to *Every Visit To The Page*.
7. Disable all pop-up blockers before paying fees due. **DO NOT USE THE BACK ARROW AT ANY TIME DURING THE PROCESS** of paying fees.
8. All proposed orders are ATTACHED to motions, ONLY agreed orders and judgments are submitted using the *Upload for Agreed and Court-Directed Orders* Link on the main menu.
9. Call the ECF HelpDesk immediately upon discovery of or making an error. Call with other helpful hints not listed.
10. "Linking" is a term used by clerk's staff to describe the phrase, "Reference to an Existing Document". Be sure to link to the specific document in question, i.e., a withdrawal of an objection is linked to the objection, not the motion.
11. All drop down menus are alphabetized. One can use the down arrow, grab the scroll bar, or use a key stroke to find the desired event or caption.
12. Open and review all pdf files before transmitting to the court to ensure correctness.

## IV. TROUBLESHOOTING

1. *Only partial menus appear on computer screen.* See #6 of helpful hints.
2. *Unable to pay fees due.* See #7 of helpful hints.
3. *Unable to login to CM-ECF.* Verify correct login is being used, i.e., PACER logins will fail when used to log into CM-ECF and vice versa.
4. *System extremely slow.* Periodically during the day slow periods will occur. The busiest time is between 2:30pm and 3:30pm. If conditions persist for an extended period of time, contact the ECF HelpDesk..
5. *Not receiving e-mails from the clerk's office.* Check with ECF HelpDesk about possible system failure. Most often the problem exists with the external filer's internet provider.