

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT MIDDLE DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA



CIVIL CASE OPENING BY ATTORNEYS CM/ECF VERSION 4.0

December 2012

The court will accept for filing only those documents submitted and signed or verified by electronic means and only those electronic documents that comply with procedures established by the court, as authorized by Rule 5(e) of the FRCP. The electronic record shall be the official record of the court.

In order to file a case electronically, an attorney must be able to do one of the following:

- (1) Pay the required filing fee with a credit card or ACH Debit over the internet;
- (2) File the case without paying filing fee, accompanied by a motion to proceed in forma pauperis; or
- (3) File a case where the filing fee is waived.

Important Points to Remember:

- The entire process **must** be completed. You will open the new civil case and file your initial document/pleading. A case is not considered filed until the complaint is filed.
- Do **not** attempt to start over again once a case number has been assigned, even if you believe that you have made a mistake in case opening. The Clerk's Office can correct case opening errors, and you should file your complaint or other initiating document under the first case number assigned.
- The filing fee is paid while filing the complaint or other initiating document. **Never** hit the back button after you have passed the credit card screens. Doing so could result in double charges.
- If double charges occur, requests for refunds must be made in writing.

Required attachments to your complaint or other initiating document:

[Civil cover sheet](#)

[Summons](#) If applicable, which can be uploaded from website under forms.

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.

The following instructions will walk you through the entire process of opening a new suit. Please have your case opening documents converted to PDF format before starting.

LOG INTO CM/ECF

Authentication

Login:

Password:

client code:

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

ECF [Civil](#) [Criminal](#) [Query](#) [Reports](#) [Utilities](#) [Search](#)

[Logout](#)



U.S. District Court
Middle District of Louisiana [TEST]
Official Court Electronic Document Filing System

Click on **Civil**

OPEN A NEW CIVIL CASE - GETTING STARTED

Civil Events

Initial Pleadings and Service

- [Civil Case Opening](#)
- [Complaints, Other Initiating Documents](#)
- [Service of Process](#)
- [Answers to Complaints](#)
- [Other Answers](#)

Motions and Related Filings

- [Motions](#)
- [Documents in Support of Motions](#)
- [Responses and Replies](#)

Email Orders

- [Email - Tyson \(RET\)](#)
- [Email - Brady \(JJB\)](#)
- [Email - Polozola \(FJP\)](#)
- [Email - Parker \(JVP\)](#)
- [Email - Riedlinger \(SCR\)](#)
- [Email - Noland \(CN\)](#)
- [Email - Dalby \(DLD\)](#)
- [Email - Clerk's Office](#)
- [If the above email links do not work, click here](#)

Click on **Open a Civil Case**.

Open a Civil Case

Office Case type Case number

Date filed 11/13/2009

Lead case number

Association type

Other court name

Other court number

Related cases

The **Open a Civil Case** screen appears and displays initial case filing information.

The office automatically defaults to Baton Rouge.

The Case type field is set to default 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. For a removal case you will enter the name of the state court from which the case was removed in the **Other court name** field and the state court case number in the **Other court number** field.

Click the **[Next]** button.

ENTER THE CIVIL COVER SHEET INFORMATION (JS-44)

Open a Civil Case

Jurisdiction

Cause of action Filter:

Nature of suit Filter:

Origin

Citizenship plaintiff

Citizenship defendant

Jury demand Class action Demand (\$000)

Arbitration code County

Fee status Fee date Date transfer

A new screen appears and displays multiple fields for entry of 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
- the parish you are filing the case under
- the fee status. This field defaults to paid, but you should select *wv* (waived) or *ifp*, if applicable.
- You should also enter your demand dollar amount. This amount is entered in thousands (000).

After entering all information click the **[Next]** button.

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 suggested.

ADD PARTY NAMES

The next screen is the participant entry screen where you all enter all parties to the case. The participant entry screen is split into two sides. The right side is used for searching/creating parties, and the left side displays what parties have been added to the case.

The screenshot shows the 'Open a Civil Case' interface. On the left, there are buttons for 'Add New Party' and 'Create Case', along with links for 'Collapse All' and 'Expand All'. On the right, under the heading 'Search for a party', there are three input fields: 'Last / Business Name', 'First Name', and 'Middle Name'. A 'Search' button is located below these fields.

This screenshot is similar to the previous one, but the 'Search' button is highlighted with a red box. The 'Last / Business Name' field contains the text 'Mouse' and the 'First Name' field contains 'Mickey'.

Before adding a party, you should first search to see if the party has already been entered into the CM/ECF party database.

Note: Standard Party Guidelines for the entry of party names attached as Appendix A.

In the *Last/Business Name* field enter the first few letters of the last name of the individual, or the business name of the party you wish to add. Click [**Search**]. After you click the search button, the system will look for any matches to your party name entry.

If the correct party name is found, click **Select Party**. If the correct party name is not found, click **Create New Party**.

The screenshot shows the 'Party Information' form. It contains various input fields for personal and contact information. The 'Role' dropdown menu is highlighted with a red box and shows 'Plaintiff (pla.pty)'. Other fields include 'Last name', 'First name', 'Middle name', 'Generation', 'Title', 'Pro se', 'Prisoner Id', 'Unit', 'Office', 'Address 1-3', 'City', 'State', 'Zip', 'Country', 'Prison', 'Phone', 'Fax', 'E-mail', 'Party text', 'Start date', 'End date', 'Corporation', and 'Notice'. An 'Add Party' button is at the bottom left.

The party information screen expands to allow the entry of more information.

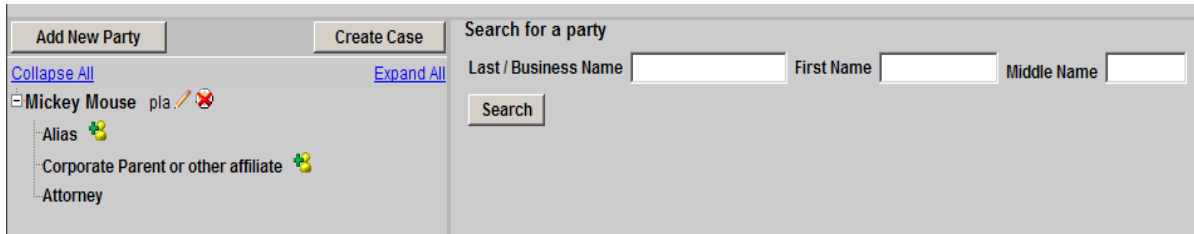
When entering a company name, the entire name is entered in the *Last name* field.

**The court prefers that you not enter addresses for parties.
Please remember to select the proper role (plaintiff, defendant, etc.) from the drop down list.**

The *Party text* field is used to enter additional descriptive information that does not belong in Last/First Name fields. For example, if a company name is added, party text might be "An Ohio corporation."

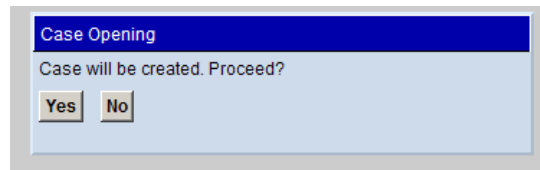
After entering all necessary party information, click **[Add Party]**.

The party name will appear on the left side of the screen. All participants (parties, aliases, attorneys and corporate parents) that are added to a case are displayed in a tree with icons to edit, add, and delete participants .



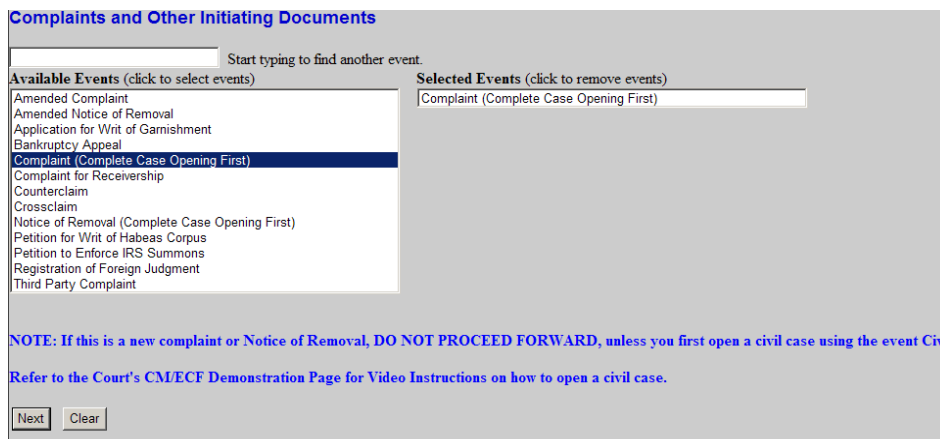
Continue searching for/adding all parties to the case. To add an **alias or corporate parent** to the party in the case, simply click the + sign next to the Alias icon or Corporate Parent icon in the case participant tree. Please note, attorneys cannot add other attorneys to a case. Once all participants have been added Click the **[Create Case]** button near the top on the left half of the screen.

The following message will appear.
Click Yes to continue with case opening.



IMPORTANT NOTE: The case number has been assigned at this point, but it will not be displayed until **after** you select which initiating document will be filed. If you start over again, you will be assigning two case numbers to your action.

FILE THE INITIATING DOCUMENT/PLEADING



Highlight the name of the document you are filing from the drop down box.

Click the **[Next]** button.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

Civil Case Number

3:09-cv-931

Next

Clear

The assigned case number appears in the Case Number box.

Click the **[Next]** button.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

[3:09-cv-00931 Mouse v. Mouse](#)

Pick Filer

[Collapse All](#)

[Expand All](#)

[3:09-cv-931](#)

Mickey Mouse pla

Mortimer Mouse dtf

Select the filer.

Select the Party:

Mouse, Mickey [pla]
Mouse, Mortimer [dtf]

Next

Clear

New Filer

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.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

[3:09-cv-00931 Mouse v. Mouse](#)

The following attorney/party associations do not exist for the above case(s).

Please check the box on the left of the screen for associations which should be created.

If the association should *not* be created, be sure the box is *unchecked*.

Mickey Mouse (pty:pla) represented by Nicole Toups (aty) Lead Notice

Next

Clear

The next screen is creating an association with you and the party you are filing the document for. This association will cause your name to be added to the docket sheet as representing the party you are filing on behalf of. Do not remove the ✓.

Click the **[Next]** button.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

[3:09-cv-00931 Mouse v. Mouse](#)

Pick Party

[Collapse All](#)

[Expand All](#)

[3:09-cv-931](#)

Mickey Mouse pla

Mortimer Mouse dtf

Please select the party that this filing is **AGAINST**.

Select the Party: OR Select a Group:

Mouse, Mickey [pla]

Mouse, Mortimer [dtf]

No Group

All Defendants

All Plaintiffs

All Parties

Next

Clear

New Party

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.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

3:09-cv-00931 Mouse v. Mouse

Add the Civil Cover Sheet and Summons as attachments to the complaint. Be sure to change the radio button below to yes, so you can add the attachments.

Please read the message on the screen and click the **[Next]** button.

The initial pleading (complaint, notice of removal, etc.) should be converted into portable document format (PDF) before beginning the case opening process. When filing the document, it will be necessary to enter the exact file path and the document. For ease in locating/uploading your PDF documents the court recommends that you 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.

The following screen is where the PDF documents are uploaded.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

3:09-cv-00931 Mouse v. Mouse

Add the Civil Cover Sheet and Summons as attachments to the complaint. Be sure to change the radio button below to yes, so you can add the attachments.

PDF files larger than 20MB must be divided into smaller files before attempting to upload. PDF files larger than 20MB must be divided into smaller files before attempting to upload. Uploading multiple large PDF files during one transaction may be slow (more than 10 minutes via a High Speed connection)and/or completely time out. If this occurs, reduce the file size by breaking it into smaller segments, or limit the transaction to one large PDF file less than 20 MB, then use the "Voluminous Exhibits" event to attach additional PDF files to the appropriate docket entry.

Select the pdf document and any attachments.

Main Document

Browse...

Attachments	Category	Description
1. <input type="text"/> Browse...	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Next Clear

In the Main Document section, click **[Browse]** to find the PDF document on your computer. Clicking the **[Browse]** button takes you to your local hard drive or network server.

To avoid the chance of erroneously uploading the wrong document, filers are strongly encouraged to use the **[Browse]** button to locate the file, and then right click on the file name and select **Open with Acrobat**. This will open the PDF and allow you to view it and ensure that it is the correct document before filing.

Once you have found the correct main document (complaint, notice of removal, etc.), you can begin uploading the attachments (civil cover sheet, summons, exhibits, etc.).

Select the pdf document and any attachments.

Main Document
I:\Vamd_docketing\ntoups\Complaint.pdf Browse...

Attachments	Category	Description
1. I:\Vamd_docketing\ntoups\Civil Cover Shee Browse...	Attachment	Civil Cover Sheet Remove
2. I:\Vamd_docketing\ntoups\Summons.pdf Browse...	Attachment	Summons Remove
3. <input type="text"/> Browse...	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Next Clear

Click the **[Browse]** button on the line for Attachment 1.

Click the **Category** drop down and highlight the correct document you are attaching. If nothing matches what you are filing, enter descriptive text in the free text box.

You must add any exhibits as attachments to the complaint. The civil cover sheet and summons, if applicable, will also be attachments to the complaint. All summons can be uploaded as one attachment.

When you have finished uploading all attachments, click the **[Next]** button

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.

The corporate disclosure statement should also be filed as a separate entry and should not be uploaded as an attachment to the complaint.

PAYMENT OF FILING FEE

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

[3:09-cv-00931 Mouse v. Mouse](#)

Is this filed with an Application to Proceed Without Prepayment of Fees?

or

Is this application filed on behalf of the USA?

Yes
 No

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 and will be taken to the final docket text screen to complete the filing. (See Page 11 - **Completing the Filing**)

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

[3:09-cv-00931 Mouse v. Mouse](#)

Fee: \$350

Filers answering N will see this screen.

Click the **[Next]** button.

Option 2: Pay Via Plastic Card (PC) (ex: VISA, Mastercard, American Express, Diners Club, Discover)

Required fields are indicated with a red asterisk *

Account Holder Name: *

Payment Amount: \$350.00

Billing Address: *





Billing Address 2:

City:

State / Province:

Zip / Postal Code:

Country: *

Card Type: *    

Card Number: * (Card number value should not contain spaces or dashes)

Security Code: * [Help finding your security code](#)

Expiration Date: * / *

Select the "Continue with Plastic Card Payment" button to continue to the next step in the Plastic Card Payment Process.

You will be taken to Pay.gov for electronic payment of the filing fee via credit card.

The Court is now accepting Bank Account Debits at this time.

The filer cannot continue without paying the filing fee by credit card or ACH Debit.

Fill in the required information. Fields with a red asterisk are required.

Click **[Continue with Plastic Card Payment]** button.

Please do not hit the back button once you have filled in credit card information. Doing so may result in duplicate charges.

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: Nicole Toups 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue Billing Address 2: City: Washington State / Province: DC Zip / Postal Code: 20212 Country: USA	Card Type: Visa Card Number: *****1111	Payment Amount: \$350.00 Transaction Date and Time: 11/13/2009 09:59 EST

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:

CC: Separate multiple email addresses with a comma

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.

Enter your email address if you wish to have confirmation sent to you upon completion of this transaction. This email serves as your receipt.

Check the box authorizing a charge to your card account.

Finish by clicking **[Submit Payment]**

COMPLETING THE FILING

After payment has been processed, or after indicating IFP or exempt status, you will be taken to the final docket text screen.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents
[3:09-cv-00931 Mouse v. Mouse](#)

Docket Text: Modify as Appropriate.

COMPLAINT against Mortimer Mouse (Filing fee \$ 350 receipt number 053N-501606.), filed by Mickey Mouse. (Attachments: # (1) Attachment Civil Cover Sheet, # (2) Attachment Summons) (Toups, Nicole)

Enter any additional language in the text box, if appropriate. Pay.gov generates the receipt number appearing in docket text. Click the **[Next]** button

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents
[3:09-cv-00931 Mouse v. Mouse](#)

Docket Text: Final Text

COMPLAINT against Mortimer Mouse (Filing fee \$ 350 receipt number 053N-501606.), filed by Mickey Mouse. (Attachments: # (1) Attachment Civil Cover Sheet, # (2) Attachment Summons)(Toups, Nicole)

Attention!! Pressing the NEXT button on this screen commits this transaction. You will have no further opportunity to modify this transaction if you continue.
 Have you redacted?

Source Document Path (for confirmation only):
 I:\amd_docketing\ntoups\Complaint.pdf pages: 1
 I:\amd_docketing\ntoups\Civil Cover Sheet.pdf pages: 1
 I:\amd_docketing\ntoups\Summons.pdf pages: 1

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

Click the **[Next]** button to complete the filing.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

[3:09-cv-00931-RET-CN Mouse v. Mouse](#)

U.S. District Court

Middle District of Louisiana [TEST]

Notice of Electronic Filing

The following transaction was entered by Toups, Nicole on 11/13/2009 at 11:12 AM CST and filed on 11/13/2009

Case Name: Mouse v. Mouse

Case Number: [3:09-cv-00931-RET-CN](#)

Filer: Mickey Mouse

Document Number: [1](#)

Docket Text:

COMPLAINT against Mortimer Mouse (Filing fee \$ 350 receipt number 053N-501606.), filed by Mickey Mouse. (Attachments: # (1) Civil Cover Sheet, # (2) Summons)(Toups, Nicole)

3:09-cv-00931-RET-CN Notice has been electronically mailed to:

Nicole Toups nicole_toups.lamd.uscourts.gov@example.net

3:09-cv-00931-RET-CN Notice has been delivered by other means to:

The following document(s) are associated with this transaction:

Document description: Main Document

Original filename: n/a

CM/ECF issues a receipt confirming the filing of the document(s).

If applicable, file additional documents with the appropriate events.

Examples: Motion to Proceed In Forma Pauperis, Motion for Temporary Restraining Order¹,
Corporate Disclosure Statement.

ASSIGNMENT OF JUDGE/ISSUANCE OF SUMMONS

Once the complaint/notice of removal has been filed, the NEF will appear indicating that the filing process of this document is now complete. The Judge and Magistrate Judge randomly assigned to this case will appear on this screen.

Clerk's Office staff will issue the summons and return them to the attorney electronically. Attorneys will then print the summons and complaint and serve in accordance with Rule 4.

**APPENDIX A
STANDARD PARTY GUIDELINES**

If unsure how a specific party name should be entered, 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 the party name as Commissioner of Social Security.

Examples: *Department of Health and Human Services*
Michael J. Astrue, Commissioner of Social Security
Social Security Commissioner
Secretary of Health and Human Services
Last Name: **Commissioner of Social Security**

3. John Does. If the 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: **Doe** **First Name:** **John**
Party Text: **I-X**

John Doe Police Officers 1-10
Last Name: **Doe** **First Name:** **John**
Party Text: **Police Officers 1-10**

4. Estates.

Example: *The Estate of James P. Sentinel by Joseph Smith*
Last Name: **Smith** **First Name:** **Joseph**
Party Text: **Executor of the Estate of**

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

5. Individuals with Titles

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

6. Unknown Names

Example: Unknown Spouse of Kenneth M. Keller, If any
Last Name: **Unknown Spouse, if any, of Kenneth M. Keller**

7. Union Names

Example: *Building Laborers Local 310 Pension Fund*
Last Name: **Local 310 Building Laborers Pension Fund**