

NEXTGEN CM/ECF Version 1.6.3

A Guide to Changes & Updates

**Available to Attorneys
in the Middle District of Pennsylvania**



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1 PDF-Related Functionality for Public Users

The utility used for preventing corrupted PDF documents from being uploaded in CM/ECF was modified by adding functionality that also prevents PDF documents that include embedded files such as audio, video, and files having a .swf extension, etc. from being uploaded. PDF documents having any of these types of embedded files that launch an application will be rejected and display an error to the filer similar to the following:

ERROR: Document is malformed or contains code which may cause an external action (such as launching an application). This PDF document cannot be accepted.

Error File: C:\Documents\PDF with Audio.pdf

NextGen 1.6.3 includes new and stricter functionality related to uploading and viewing PDF documents. In some instances, PDFs that were previously allowed to be uploaded will no longer be allowed to be uploaded in NextGen CM/ECF Release 1.6 (and higher). E-filers may experience problems and below is information to help.

PDF Content Criteria

The following list describes PDF content that will not be accepted by NextGen CM/ECF. If you try to upload a PDF with prohibited content, it will be rejected. The simplest way to address most PDF upload rejections is to flatten the PDF and then upload it. Instructions are provided in the following section for flattening a PDF.

PDFs with the following content will be rejected:

- Does not comply with PDF format standards.
- Contains JavaScript.
- Encrypted or password protected.
- Contains scripts which can launch an external application.
- Contains internal attachments.
- Contains audio and video content.
- Created with Mac OS X using a fillable form in the Safari browser.
- Created with Mac OS X using MS Word and selecting the option, “Best for printing”.

How to Flatten your Document

The simplest way to address most PDF rejections is to flatten the PDF before submitting it the court. To flatten a PDF:

1. Open your PDF in Adobe Acrobat or another tool that lets you work with PDF documents.
2. Print the PDF file to your PDF printer (File > Print > select Adobe PDF or another PDF printer listed in the drop-down list).
3. Save the printed PDF for filing.

NOTE: If you use Kofax Power PDF (formerly known as Nuance), use the “Flatten File” feature found at Advanced Processing > Flatten File.

2 New Defend Trade Secrets Act of 2016 Nature of Suit Code

The Statistics Subcommittee agreed to create a new Nature of Suit (NOS) for cases involving the Defend Trade Secrets Act of 2016. A new NOS Code (880) has been created to identify these cases. The nature of suit is effective October 1, 2020 and will be accompanied by an updated JS-44, Civil Cover Sheet.

3 Intermittent Filing Issues with White Screen

A court has reported intermittent filing issues where a white screen is displayed to attorneys, preventing the attorney from completing their filing. This issue has been fixed.

4 Blank Pages Viewing PDFs in Acrobat Reader

Some PDFs have an unusual structure for the page tree. If these documents are filed in CM/ECF, when a user attempts to open them in Acrobat Reader (not the browser), Acrobat will not display any of the document pages that may be corrupted (unusual page tree structure). If the documents are opened in a browser (IE/FF/Chrome), the PDF document opens, and no pages are missing. CM/ECF has been upgraded to prevent this problem, allowing all pages of the PDF and headers to display without errors.

5 Pay.gov – Prevention of Duplicate Payments

Multiple courts have reported that outside users experience intermittent issues when using Pay.gov to pay for fees collected through CM/ECF docketing events. After entering their payment information in Pay.gov, the users receive an error message and the event will not complete in CM/ECF, however, payment was successful in Pay.gov. The users then re-attempt to file the event and pay the fees and docketing is successful in CM/ECF. The result is that the filer has been charged twice for the event and court staff must issue a refund.

This upgrade provides a solution to prevent the payment transaction from failing upon returning the user to CM/ECF.