



**ELECTRONIC FILING PROCEDURES
FOR SOCIAL SECURITY CASES
DECEMBER 17, 2007**

*Check our website: www.mdd.uscourts.gov for updates.

E-FILING IN SOCIAL SECURITY CASES

E-filing is mandatory in social security cases filed on or after August 1, 2006 and in all cases pending as of August 1, 2006.

CASE OPENING

OPTION 1: OPENING A SOCIAL SECURITY CASE ELECTRONICALLY

Prepare your complaint, summons(es) and civil cover sheet. Convert each document to a separate PDF. The complaint should **not** include the Plaintiff's social security number. Prepare a second document Statement of Social Security Number. The Statement should be served with the complaint and summons but **not** filed with the court. A sample Complaint and Statement of Social Security Number are attached as Appendices A and B.

Log into the CM/ECF system.

On the Blue Menu Bar click on Civil.

Under Open a Case click on Open Case.

The next few screens will prompt you to enter information about the case which is used to set up the docket sheet for your case and which the Administrative Office of the Courts uses to compile national statistics. It is very important that this information is entered correctly.

For the Office pick Greenbelt if the plaintiff lives in Calvert, Charles, Montgomery, Prince George's, or Saint Mary's county. Pick Baltimore if the plaintiff lives in any other county or Baltimore City.

The Case type is cv.

Do not fill in any information for Lead case number, Other court name, or Other court number. If you think your case is related to another case in this court under L.R. 103.1.b, check the box for Related cases and click Next. You will be prompted to enter the related case number. Please do this in the form of [Office (1 or 8)]:[Year (2 digit)]-cv-[number]. For example: 1:06-cv-1234. Do not include the judge's initials. You will then be prompted to confirm the Related case number. If it is correct click on Next. **Note:** The system will still randomly assign a judge to your case. When court staff reviews it a determination will be made as to whether it is in fact a related case which should be reassigned to the judge who handled the first case.

MCECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Logout

Open a Civil Case

Office Case type Case number

Date filed 12/18/2007

Lead case number

Association type

Other court name

Other court number

Related cases

Click on Next.

For Jurisdiction pick 2 (U.S. Government Defendant).

Select the closest cause of action to the one you filled in on the civil cover sheet. For statistical reasons the causes of actions in the system do not directly match U.S.C. citations. The three most common causes of action used in social security appeals are: 42:0405id (denial of SSI benefits); 42:0405wc (denial of disability benefits); and 42:0405ww (denial of disability benefits to a widow or widower).

Pick the Nature of suit you filled in on the civil cover sheet. In social security cases the most common nature of suit codes are 863 (Social Security DIWC/DIWW) and 864 (Social Security SSID Tit. XIV).

Leave Origin as 1 (Original Proceeding). Do not fill in the citizenship of plaintiff or defendant. Leave the Jury demand as n (none) and class action as n. Do not fill in an Arbitration code. Do not fill in a Demand.

Pick the plaintiff's county of residence from the drop down menu.

MCECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Logout

Open a Civil Case

Jurisdiction

Cause of action

Nature of suit

Origin

Citizenship plaintiff

Citizenship defendant

Jury demand Class action Demand (\$000)

Arbitration code County

Fee status Fee date Date transfer

For the Fee status pick pd (paid) if you are going to pay the filing fee or fp (in forma pauperis) if you are filing an IFP motion. If you are going to pay the filing fee it must be received by the clerk's office within two working days from the date the case was opened. If it is not, your summonses will not be issued and the case will be dismissed without prejudice. When you send in the filing fee be sure to include the case name and number. If you are seeking leave to proceed in forma pauperis, the motion must be filed immediately after the complaint is filed. Leave the Fee date blank.

Click Next.

The next step is to enter the parties. It is very important that this information be entered accurately and that you not fill in any extra information even if the system shows text boxes for it to be filled in.

Type in the last name of the plaintiff and click Search. If a list of names appears and one is an **exact** match, click on that name and the Select name from list. If no list appears or if there is no exact match on the list, click on Create new party. On the Party Information screen fill in the last name, first name, middle initial, and generation (if applicable). Be sure to change the Role to Plaintiff. **Do not fill in the plaintiff's address or any other information on this screen.** Click on Submit.

The screenshot shows the ECF Party Information form for Clara Smith. The form includes fields for Title, Role (Plaintiff (pla:pty)), Prisoner Id, Unit, Office, Address 1, Address 2, Address 3, City, State, Zip, County, Country, Prison (Not Associated with Prison, ALDERSON), Phone, Fax, Party text, and Start date (12/18/2007). At the bottom, there are buttons for Attorney..., Alias..., Corporate parent or other affiliate..., Review..., Submit, Cancel, and Clear. A note states: "Add all attorneys, aliases, corporate parents and other affiliates before clicking the Submit button."

Special instructions if the plaintiff is a parent or guardian appealing the denial of benefits for a minor child: Enter the parent or guardian's name and pick the role Plaintiff. At the bottom of the screen click on Alias. Search for the minor child's name. If a list of names appears and one is an **exact** match, click on that name and the Select name from list. If no list appears or if there is no exact match on the list, click on Create new alias. On the Alias Information screen fill in the minor child's name. Select obo from the drop down list next to Role. Click on Add alias.

When you are back on the Party Information screen click on Submit.

Type in the last name of the defendant and click Search. You will find several variations on the name Astrue or Appointed Social Security Commissioner. Select the one that matches the way you typed the name on your complaint and summonses. Click on Select name from list. Under Party Text, you may type in their title exactly as it appears on your complaint, i.e., Commissioner, Social Security Administration. Do not change or fill in any other information. Click on Submit.

Click on End Party Selection. This is the last step before the case is opened. After you click on the Next button the case will be opened and you will not be able to go back and change any of the information you have entered.

Click on Next. You will receive a message that Case Number [] has been opened. Write down the case number. You will see a link Docket Lead Event? Click on this link.

The next step is to docket your complaint and attached documents. The complaint must be filed immediately after the case is opened. If for any reason you cannot file your complaint after opening a case, you must contact court staff immediately.

You will see a screen Complaints and Other Initiating Documents. Click on the arrow next to the blank box. From the drop down menu chose Complaint and click on Next. The system should automatically fill in the case number that was assigned to your case. If for some reason it does not you will need to fill it in. Click Next.

The next screen should show your case number and the short title of the case. You will be prompted to select the filer. Choose the plaintiff and click Next.

You will receive a message that “The following attorney/party associations do not exist for the above case” with the plaintiff’s name and your name. **Make sure that the box to the left of the screen is checked and that the boxes for both Lead and Notice are checked.** If you do not do this, your appearance will not be entered and you will not receive electronic notification of any filings. Click Next.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

[1:06-cv-00085 Smith v. Barnhart](#)

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*.

John Smith (pty:pla) represented by Frances Kessler (aty) Lead Notice

Next

Clear



You will be prompted to select the party that the filing is against. Click on the Defendant and then Next.

The system will display a select PDF document screen. The system will not let you proceed unless you select a document. To select a document you can either enter the path and filename of the document in the Filename box or you can click on the Browse... button to view documents on your computer and/or network. Clicking the Browse... button will cause the system to display a File Upload pop up. To find a PDF document make sure that the box Files of type is set to display All files or PDF files. Once you have located the PDF version of your Complaint, click on it to select it. To verify that the document is the correct one, right click on the file name then click on Open. This will cause the system to display the document. Once you have verified the document is correct close out of it. Click on Open in the File Upload box. The system will then insert the path and file name in the file name box. Check Yes for the prompt Attachments to Document. Click on Next.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents
1:06-cv-00085 Smith v. Barnhart

Select the **pdf** document (for example: C:\199cv501-21.pdf).

Filename

Attachments to Document: No Yes

You may electronically attach your summons or submit them to the clerk’s office in paper format. To attach your summonses electronically, please follow these steps:

The system will display another select PDF document screen. Browse... or enter the path and filename for your summons and select as above. Your Civil Cover Sheet should be your first attachment. Leave the Category blank and under Description type in “Summons”. Click on Add to List. Repeat this process to attach your civil cover sheet. Under category chose Civil Cover Sheet. Leave the description blank. Click on add to List. **Do not attach any motions to the complaint. All motions must be separate entries from the complaint.** Click Next.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents
[1:06-cv-00085 Smith v. Barnhart](#)

Select one or more attachments.
 1) Enter the pdf document that contains attachment (for example: C:\appendix.pdf).

Filename

2) Before proceeding to step 3, describe the document using the Category list, the Description box, or both.

Category **Description**

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.

The system will now ask how payment will be made. If you are paying by credit card or check or can answer no to any of the questions, type “N” in the blank field. If you can answer yes to any of the questions, type “Y” in the blank field. Click on Next.

NOTE: If you answer “Y” to any of the questions, the system will automatically direct you to the docket text screen, however, if you answer “N”, the system will automatically direct you to the pay.gov screen.

ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Logout

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents
[1:07-cv-00059 Smith v. Roberts](#)

Is this filed with an Application to Proceed Without Prepayment of Fees Y/N?
 or
 Is this complaint filed on behalf of the USA Y/N?
 or
 Will you be paying the fee by any method other than credit card or via bank account debit Y/N?

The system now displays the filing fee amount, click Next.

The system will take you to the pay.gov screen. You will be able to enter your payment method for this case. Please refer to the pay.gov instructions for more details regarding how to enter your payment method.

System Message

- The system has populated the Payment Date with the next available payment date.

Online Payment [Return to your originating application](#)

Step 1: Enter Payment Information 1 | 2

This item is payable by [Bank Account Debit \(ACH\)](#) or [Plastic Card \(ex: VISA, Mastercard, American Express, Diners Club, Discover\)](#)

Option 1: Pay Via Bank Account (ACH) [About ACH Debit](#)

Required fields are indicated with a red asterisk *

Account Holder Name: *

Payment Amount: \$350.00

Account Type: *

Routing Number: *

Account Number: *

Confirm Account Number: *

Check Number:

Routing Number Account Number Check Number

⑆ 0 2 6 9 4 6 7 8 3 ⑆ ⑆ 9 2 4 3 7 6 7 3 9 0 ⑆ ⑆ 1 2 3 4 ⑆

Payment Date: 12/12/2007

Select the "Continue with ACH Payment" button to continue to the next step in the ACH Debit Payment Process.

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.

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: *

Once you have entered your desired payment type, click on the appropriate "Continue with...payment". The system will lead you to the Authorize payment screen, fill in your email address as well as any other email address that you wish to be copied. Click on Submit Payment.

Account Holder Name: alicia shepard
 Payment Amount: \$350.00
 Account Type: Business Checking
 Routing Number: 042000424
 Account Number: ****1212
 Check Number: 300

Payment Date: 12/12/2007

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 agree to the authorization and disclosure language. *

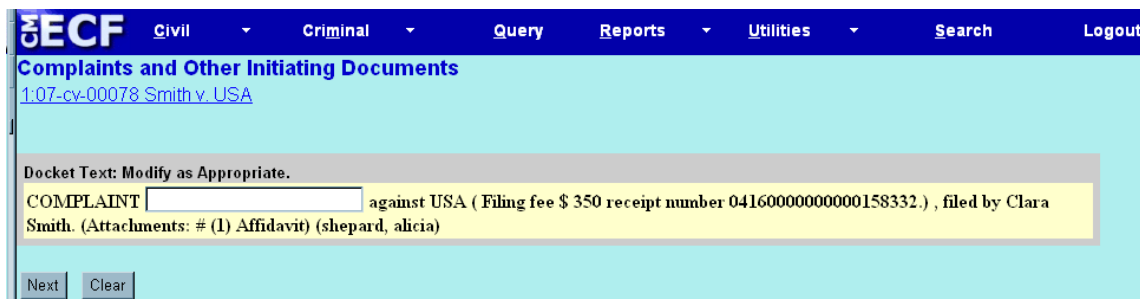
an end-user authenticated in compliance with our security procedures may be deemed effective as if made by you even if they are subsequently determined to be unauthorized. Such instructions will be deemed effective, and you may be liable for the amount of such instructions, even though they are not transmitted or authorized by you. If you have authorized us in advance to a payment out of the account, you can stop any of these payments if you contact us sufficiently in advance. In some instances, you can cancel payments yourself online. We may not be able to stop the payment if you do not contact us at least three business days before the payment is scheduled to be made. If you call or e-mail, we may require that we receive your request in writing (by paper and not e-mail) within 14 calendar days. Our liability and that of any agency for any failed or otherwise erroneous transaction cannot exceed the amount of the transaction. We will not be liable for circumstances beyond our control or within your control. For instance, we will not be liable if: (a) Through no fault of ours, there is not enough money in the financial institution account to make the transfer; (b) The service was not working properly and you knew it was not working properly when you started the transfer; (c) You provide us with incorrect financial institution account information or duplicate payment instructions; or (d) Circumstances beyond our control (such as fire, flood, or strike) prevent the transfer, despite reasonable precautions that we have taken. PLEASE BE SURE TO PRINT OUT A COPY OF THIS AUTHORIZATION AND DISCLOSURE LANGUAGE AND KEEP A COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS.

[View Authorization and Disclosure in a separate window.](#)

Press the "Submit Payment" Button only once. Pressing the button more than once could result in multiple transactions.

The system will take you back to the CM/ECF system and display your Docket text. You may

add any additional text in the blank field if needed. Pay.gov automatically updates your docket text with your receipt number and it will show in this preview. Click [Next](#).



The screenshot shows the ECF (Electronic Case Filing) system interface. At the top, there is a blue navigation bar with the ECF logo and several menu items: Civil, Criminal, Query, Reports, Utilities, Search, and Logout. Below the navigation bar, the page title is "Complaints and Other Initiating Documents". Underneath, there is a link for "1:07-cv-00078 Smith v. USA". The main content area has a light blue background. A grey box contains the text "Docket Text: Modify as Appropriate." Below this, a yellow box contains the docket entry text: "COMPLAINT [] against USA (Filing fee \$ 350 receipt number 0416000000000158332.), filed by Clara Smith. (Attachments: # (1) Affidavit) (shepard, alicia)". At the bottom of the form, there are two buttons: "Next" and "Clear".

The next screen will display the docket text for the docket entry. Click [Next](#).

The system will display the final text of the docket entry along with a warning that clicking Next will file the document. Up to this point no information about the complaint has been entered into the system and no notification has been sent to anyone. If everything is accurate, click [Next](#). If there are any discrepancies, hitting your Back browser button will only allow you to modify your docket entry, you will not be able to attach or detach any other documents to this Complaint. **By clicking next, you are committing to this transaction and there will be no other opportunities to modify. Please contact the Clerk’s Office if you need assistance. Click [Next](#).**

The system will then display a notice of electronic filing. Your name and email address should appear under the language Notice has been electronically mailed to. This is proof the document has been filed as well as the date and time it was filed. It is in effect a “date stamped” copy. You can save or print a copy of this notice.

Please keep in mind that once a document is filed, CM/ECF will only allow one opportunity to view and or print the document for each login account.

If you are seeking leave to proceed in forma pauperis, you must now file the IFP motion. It is not necessary to submit a proposed order because in most cases the court will rule on the motion with a “paperless” order or prepare its own order.

On the Blue Menu Bar click on [Civil](#) then [Motions](#). From the menu choose [Proceed In Forma Pauperis](#) and click [Next](#).

Fill in your case number and click [Next](#).

You will be prompted to select the filer (plaintiff). Then click [Next](#).

The system will display the Select PDF screen. Select your motion and click [Next](#).

The system will display a response deadline. You should ignore this deadline since IFP motions are effectively ex parte.

Although you are allowed an opportunity to modify the docket text there is generally no reason to do so. Click [Next](#).

The next business day court staff will perform quality control on your case and if necessary, make any edits. Once the fee is received or the IFP motion is granted staff will print your summons, sign and seal them and mail the paper copies to you. A scanned version of the signed and sealed summons will be e-filed so that there is a copy in the court records.

Service of the summons and complaint must be made in the traditional manner.

If for any reason you are not able to docket your complaint, and IFP motion (if applicable), after opening a case, you should contact the court immediately and ask to speak to someone in case processing.

OPTION 2: FILING A SOCIAL SECURITY CASE IN THE TRADITIONAL MANNER

To file a new case, you should submit to the Clerk:

- 1 paper copy of the complaint along with any attachments and/or motions or other documents being filed at the same time.
- The paper copy of the complaint should be signed by counsel. It is not necessary to scan counsel's signature for the PDF version.
- 1 paper copy of the civil cover sheet
- A CD containing PDF versions of the complaint or other initiating document(s), civil cover sheet, and any attachments and/or motions or other documents being filed at the same time. Each attachment, motion, or other document should be a separate PDF. It is not necessary to submit a separate CD for each document.
- If you are filing more than one case, each case must be on a CD.
- If summonses are needed, original paper summonses (PDF versions of the summonses are not required).
- If service is to be made by private process, there is no need to submit service copies to the Clerk.
- The filing fee if applicable.

The Clerk's Office will open the case and electronically file the complaint or other initiating document and any other documents submitted. You will be electronically notified of the filing of the complaint. The notification will include your case number. We will electronically file summonses. The paper summonses will be returned to you for service. Your CD will also be returned to you along with the summonses.

RETURN OF SERVICE

When you are filing returns of service for the Commissioner and/or the Attorney General, under Service of Process choose the event Certificate of Service. While filing the return you will be prompted “Should the document you are filing link to another document in this case?” Check the box next to this question. On the next screen there will be a list of the documents filed in the case. Check the box next to the complaint.

When you get to the screen to modify the docket text add in language to the effect “and summons served on [Commissioner or Attorney General] on [date of service]”

ENTRY OF APPEARANCE BY GOVERNMENT ATTORNEYS

A member of our bar can enter her or his appearance at any time by filing a Notice of Appearance using her or his CM/ECF login. **Note:** the system will only pick up the appearance of the attorney whose login is used. You cannot enter the appearance of another attorney. If more than one attorney will be handling a case, a separate notice of appearance must be filed for each attorney using that attorney’s login. If you do not wish to enter your appearance before an answer is filed it is not necessary to file a separate notice of appearance. The system will prompt you to enter it when filing the answer.

If you are an agency attorney who is not a member of our bar, you must submit to the clerk’s office a Request for Entry of Appearance on behalf of Federal Government Agency in paper format. The clerk’s office will then enter your appearance in the case. This should be done at least two (2) working days before you will be filing in the case.

CONSENT TO PROCEED IN FRONT OF MAGISTRATE JUDGE

If counsel agrees to proceed in front of a magistrate judge, there are several different ways the consent forms may be filed.

First, and simplest, each attorney can e-file their own consent.

Second, the attorney whose login and password are being used to file the document may obtain approval from any other attorney to state that the other attorney has authorized him or her to sign the document on his or her behalf. Such approval may be indicated as in the following example:

/s/	/s/
Sally Solicitor, Esquire	John M. Barrister, Esquire
(signed by John M. Barrister with permission of Sally Solicitor)	

In such circumstances, the attorney whose login and password is used to file the document is responsible for maintaining a record of when and how permission was obtained to sign the other attorney’s name in case any questions arise.

Third, the attorney whose login and password are being used to file the document may obtain and maintain in his or her records a paper copy of the document signed by the other attorney. Possession of such a signed copy may be indicated as in the following example:

/s/	/s/
<hr/>	
Sally Solicitor, Esquire (signed copy of document bearing signature of Sally Solicitor is being maintained in office of John M. Barrister)	John M. Barrister, Esquire

In such circumstances, the attorney whose login and password are used to file the document is responsible for maintaining the signed copy of the document until all appeals have been exhausted or the time for seeking appellate review has expired.

Fourth, the attorney whose login and password are being used to file the document may obtain original signatures from all attorneys who are filing the document and scan the document.

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS

Do not put the plaintiff's full social security number on any documents you file. The only places it should appear are on the Statement of Social Security Number which is not e-filed and in the agency record.

APPENDIX A

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MARYLAND**

_____ :
 _____ :
 _____ :
 vs. : CIVIL ACTION NO. _____
 COMMISSIONER, SOCIAL SECURITY :

COMPLAINT

1. Plaintiff is a resident of _____.
(Provide your City or County and State of residence)

2. Plaintiff complains of a decision against him/her bearing the following caption:

IN THE CASE OF:

CLAIM FOR:

(Claimant)

(Type of benefits)

(Wage Earner if Different from Claimant)

3. The date of the final decision by the Secretary against plaintiff is _____.

4. Plaintiff claims that the final decision of the Secretary is erroneous as a matter of fact and as a matter of law.

WHEREFORE plaintiff seeks judicial review by this Court pursuant to 42 U.S.C. Section 405(g), and entry of judgment for such relief as may be proper, including costs.

(Date)

(Signature)

(Printed name, address, and phone number of Plaintiff)

APPENDIX B

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

**THIS DOCUMENT MUST BE SERVED ON THE GOVERNMENT
ALONG WITH THE SUMMONS AND COMPLAINT.
IT IS NOT TO BE FILED WITH THE COURT.**

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MARYLAND

_____ :
vs. : CIVIL ACTION NO. _____
COMMISSIONER, SOCIAL SECURITY :

STATEMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

Social Security Number of Claimant: _____

Social Security Number of Worker (if different than claimant): _____

(Date)

(Signature)

(Printed name, address, and phone number of Plaintiff)