

About These Forms

- 1. In General.** This and the other forms available from uscourts.gov websites illustrate some types of information that are useful to have in complaints and some other pleadings. The forms do not try to cover every type of case. They are limited to types of cases often filed in federal courts by those who represent themselves or who may not have much experience in federal courts.
- 2. Not Legal Advice.** No form provides legal advice. No form substitutes for having or consulting a lawyer. If you are not a lawyer and are suing or have been sued, it is best to have or consult a lawyer if possible.
- 3. No Guarantee.** Following a form does not guarantee that any pleading is legally or factually correct or sufficient.
- 4. Variations Possible.** A form may call for more or less information than a particular court requires. The fact that a form asks for certain information does not mean that every court or a particular court requires it. And if the form does not ask for certain information, a particular court might still require it. Consult the rules and caselaw that govern in the court where you are filing the pleading.
- 5. Examples Only.** The forms do not try to address or cover all the different types of claims or defenses, or how specific facts might affect a particular claim or defense. Some of the forms, such as the form for a generic complaint, apply to different types of cases. Others apply only to specific types of cases. Be careful to use the form that fits your case and the type of pleading you want to file. Be careful to change the information the form asks for to fit the facts and circumstances of your case.
- 6. No Guidance on Timing or Parties.** The forms do not give any guidance on when certain kinds of pleadings or claims or defenses have to be raised, or who has to be sued. Some pleadings, claims, or defenses have to be raised at a certain point in the case or within a certain period of time. And there are limits on who can be named as a party in a case and when they have to be added. Lawyers and people representing themselves must know the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and the caselaw setting out these and other requirements. The current Federal Rules of Civil Procedure are available, for free, at www.uscourts.gov.
- 7. Privacy Requirements.** Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 5.2 addresses the privacy and security concerns over public access to electronic court files. Under this rule, papers filed with the court should not contain anyone's full social-security number or full birth date; the name of a person known to be a minor; or a complete financial-account number. A filing may include only the last four digits of a social-security number and taxpayer identification number; the year of someone's birth; a minor's initials; and the last four digits of a financial-account number.

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MARYLAND

(Write the full name of each plaintiff who is filing this complaint. If the names of all the plaintiffs cannot fit in the space above, please write "see attached" in the space and attach an additional page with the full list of names.)

-against-

(Write the full name of each defendant who is being sued. If the names of all the defendants cannot fit in the space above, please write "see attached" in the space and attach an additional page with the full list of names.)

Complaint for a Civil Case

Case No. _____
(to be filled in by the Clerk's Office)

Jury Trial: Yes No
(check one)

I. The Parties to This Complaint

A. The Plaintiff(s)

Provide the information below for each plaintiff named in the complaint. Attach additional pages if needed.

Name _____
Street Address _____
City and County _____
State and Zip Code _____
Telephone Number _____
E-mail Address _____

B. The Defendant(s)

Provide the information below for each defendant named in the complaint, whether the defendant is an individual, a government agency, an organization, or a corporation. For an individual defendant, include the person's job or title (if known). Attach additional pages if needed.

Defendant No. 1

Name _____
Job or Title _____
(if known)
Street Address _____
City and County _____
State and Zip Code _____
Telephone Number _____
E-mail Address _____
(if known)

Defendant No. 2

Name _____

Job or Title _____
(if known)

Street Address _____

City and County _____

State and Zip Code _____

Telephone Number _____

E-mail Address _____
(if known)

Defendant No. 3

Name _____

Job or Title _____
(if known)

Street Address _____

City and County _____

State and Zip Code _____

Telephone Number _____

E-mail Address _____
(if known)

Defendant No. 4

Name _____

Job or Title _____
(if known)

Street Address _____

City and County _____

State and Zip Code _____

Telephone Number _____

E-mail Address _____
(if known)

(If there are more than four defendants, attach an additional page providing the same information for each additional defendant.)

II. Basis for Jurisdiction

Federal courts are courts of limited jurisdiction (limited power). Generally, only two types of cases can be heard in federal court: cases involving a federal question and cases involving diversity of citizenship of the parties. Under 28 U.S.C. § 1331, a case arising under the United States Constitution or federal laws or treaties is a federal question case. Under 28 U.S.C. § 1332, a case in which a citizen of one State sues a citizen of another State or nation and the amount at stake is more than \$75,000 is a diversity of citizenship case. In a diversity of citizenship case, no defendant may be a citizen of the same State as any plaintiff.

What is the basis for federal court jurisdiction? (*check all that apply*)

- Federal question
- Diversity of citizenship

Fill out the paragraphs in this section that apply to this case.

A. If the Basis for Jurisdiction Is a Federal Question

List the specific federal statutes, federal treaties, and/or provisions of the United States Constitution that are at issue in this case.

B. If the Basis for Jurisdiction Is Diversity of Citizenship

1. The Plaintiff(s)

a. If the plaintiff is an individual

The plaintiff, (*name*) _____, is a citizen of the State of (*name*) _____.

b. If the plaintiff is a corporation

The plaintiff, (*name*) _____, is incorporated under the laws of the State of (*name*) _____, and has its principal place of business in the State of (*name*) _____.

(If more than one plaintiff is named in the complaint, attach an additional page providing the same information for each additional plaintiff.)

2. The Defendant(s)

a. If the defendant is an individual

The defendant, *(name)* _____, is a citizen of the State of *(name)* _____. Or is a citizen of *(foreign nation)* _____.

b. If the defendant is a corporation

The defendant, *(name)* _____, is incorporated under the laws of the State of *(name)* _____, and has its principal place of business in the State of *(name)* _____. Or is incorporated under the laws of *(foreign nation)* _____, and has its principal place of business in *(name)* _____.

(If more than one defendant is named in the complaint, attach an additional page providing the same information for each additional defendant.)

3. The Amount in Controversy

The amount in controversy—the amount the plaintiff claims the defendant owes or the amount at stake—is more than \$75,000, not counting interest and costs of court, because *(explain)*:

IV. Relief

State briefly and precisely what damages or other relief the plaintiff asks the court to order. Do not make legal arguments. Include any basis for claiming that the wrongs alleged are continuing at the present time. Include the amounts of any actual damages claimed for the acts alleged and the basis for these amounts. Include any punitive or exemplary damages claimed, the amounts, and the reasons you claim you are entitled to actual or punitive money damages. For any request for injunctive relief, explain why monetary damages at a later time would not adequately compensate you for the injuries you sustained, are sustaining, or will sustain as a result of the events described above, or why such compensation could not be measured.

V. Certification and Closing

Under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 11, by signing below, I certify to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief that this complaint: (1) is not being presented for an improper purpose, such as to harass, cause unnecessary delay, or needlessly increase the cost of litigation; (2) is supported by existing law or by a nonfrivolous argument for extending, modifying, or reversing existing law; (3) the factual contentions have evidentiary support or, if specifically so identified, will likely have evidentiary support after a reasonable opportunity for further investigation or discovery; and (4) the complaint otherwise complies with the requirements of Rule 11.

A. For Parties Without an Attorney

I agree to provide the Clerk’s Office with any changes to my address where case-related papers may be served. I understand that my failure to keep a current address on file with the Clerk’s Office may result in the dismissal of my case.

Date of signing: _____, 20__.

Signature of Plaintiff _____

Printed Name of Plaintiff _____

(If more than one plaintiff is named in the complaint, attach an additional certification and signature page for each additional plaintiff.)

B. For Attorneys

Date of signing: _____, 20__.

Signature of Attorney _____

Printed Name of Attorney _____

Bar Number _____

Name of Law Firm _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____

Email Address _____