

# MISSISSIPPI ELECTRONIC COURTS (MEC) Frequently Asked Questions

## GENERAL

- What is MEC?
- Why Electronic Case Files?
- What is the cost for using MEC?
- Who developed MEC?
- How do I get Help?
- How are electronic documents served?
- How do I get a copy of newly-filed documents?
- How do I start receiving e-mail notices from MEC?
- Are there any limits to filing privileges?
- Can I get an exemption to filing electronically?
- When is MEC available?

## ACCESS RELATED

- Can any member of the public use MEC to file documents with the court?
- How does an attorney become an authorized MEC user?
- Are there separate logins and passwords for PAMEC and MEC?
- What are the rules and procedures regarding filing electronically?
- What type of training will be available?
- My firm already has a PAMEC login and password. Do I need to establish a separate PAMEC account, or can I use the firm account?
- I am changing firms. Do I need to establish a new e-filing login and password?
- How do I change my address with the Court?
- How do I change my MEC password?
- Why do I get a second login screen after I've already logged into MEC?
- Why am I getting an invalid login message?
- Why do I get an invalid login message once I have already logged into the court and I am retrieving a docket or document?
- What should we do when an attorney leaves the firm?
- Will I have the same filing login for all MEC courts in which I practice?
- How do I change my default PAMEC login?
- Why am I receiving the message "You do not have permission to view this document"?

## **TECHNICAL – GENERAL WEB ISSUES**

- How can I search for a word or phrase on a web page?
- What is a "link" or "hyperlink"?
- What is a plug-in?
- How can I create a shortcut icon on my desk top that will take me directly to the MEC system?
- How do I cut, copy and paste?
- How do I undo an edit command?
- How do I redo an edit command?

## **TECHNICAL – MEC ISSUES**

- What hardware and software will attorneys need to participate in MEC?
- My machine locks up at the login screen, but other attorneys at my firm don't have that problem—why me?
- Why does my session freeze?
- Why can I not access a previous page viewed by clicking on the "Back" button on the browser after selecting a link?
- I receive a "Data Missing" error when I try to print reports from MEC. What does this mean?
- Why won't the "data only" format of the cases report display in MEC?
- Are there any special instructions regarding AOL users?
- I have logged into MEC but I do not get all of the docket entries. Why is that happening?
- Why are some menu options not appearing, or the window is blank?
- Which browsers work with MEC?
- Which browsers are not compatible with MEC?
- Can I use the Mozilla or Firefox browsers?
- Can I use the MSN Explorer browser?
- I have experienced problems downloading audio files from MEC.

## **TECHNICAL – PDF RELATED**

- What is a PDF document?
- What is Adobe Acrobat?
- How do I a PDF document?
- I tried to scan my document into PDF but a lot of errors appeared.
- How do you start the Adobe Acrobat Reader program in order to view a PDF document on a website?
- Is it possible to have the Adobe Acrobat Reader open in a separate window, one not a part of my browser, or, alternatively, if the Adobe Reader opens on my PC as a separate Window, is it possible to make it open within the browser?
- Is the optimum way of viewing PDF files within the browser or in a separate window?
- When I print an image from MEC, the right edge gets cut off.
- How do I copy a PDF text file to my word processor?

- Can I use Adobe Acrobat 5.0?
- I am using Adobe Acrobat 5.0. When I try to view PDF documents in MEC, I see a blank screen. How can I fix this?
- The Administrative Procedures have a limitation on the size of submitted PDF documents. What can I do to ensure I don't exceed the limit?
- Why are my PDF documents blank when I print them?
- When I print my PDF document, why is it a mirror image?
- When filing documents electronically, why do I get the message "ERROR: this document has security measures in effect?"
- Why do I get the message "Error reading linearized hint data?"
- I want to copy and paste from a PDF document, but I can't seem to select any text. How do I copy and paste?
- My document seems to change when I make it into PDF; what's happening?
- Is it true that the only way to make a document into PDF format is by using a scanner?
- How do you determine which version of Acrobat Reader is installed on your computer?

## **TECHNICAL – NOTICE OF ELECTRONIC FILING**

- How do I receive my copy of a filed document?
- Who receives the automatic e-mail notification?
- Is there a time limit for when the copy from the NEF expires?
- If being served by email, is there an option available to notify the system you are away and will not be receiving emails?
- Can an attorney's support staff receive a copy of the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF)?
- How do I save the copy of the filed document?"
- Are there any reasons why I wouldn't receive my MEC-generated NEF e-mails?
- When I click on the link in my e-mail, why am I prompted for a login?
- When I click on the link in my e-mail, why do I get a blank screen?
- I click on the document number link and nothing happens. Why?
- Can I obtain a daily summary of docketing activities rather than receive a notice for each filing?

## **CASE RELATED**

- How can I verify whether or not all the documents I filed electronically were posted?
- Must I register before I can file through MEC?
- When I query a case in MEC, it gives me the previous case I looked at instead.
- I tried to file a document but it says "format not recognized." What am I doing wrong?
- Are there procedural rules relating to electronic filing?
- When a user files a pleading with the court, does the system automatically serve the other parties or does the user have to do something extra to serve the others? And, do the other parties only receive notification of a filing, or do they receive the actual document?
- How will documents with signatures be handled for documents filed electronically?
- Can an attorney access any other cases besides his/her own?
- What is the Cases Report and how do I use it?

- How do we know who is participating electronically on a case?
- I made a mistake, such as filing in the wrong case or submitting the wrong document. What should I do?

## GENERAL

### What is MEC?

Beginning in 2005, the Mississippi Supreme Court began a measured and comprehensive move to evaluate, test, and implement electronic filing and case management in Mississippi courts. Since May 2008, the Madison County Chancery Clerk's office has been testing a version of the federal Case Management/Electronic Case Filing (CM/ECF) system, now referred to as the Mississippi Electronic Courts (MEC) system. The MEC system is a comprehensive case management system that allows courts to maintain electronic case files and offer electronic filing over the internet. Courts can make all case information immediately available electronically through the Internet. ([Back to top](#))

### Why Electronic Case Files?

Judges, court staff, and the public now have the capability to access electronic docket information and case management data. As most documents are now initially created first in electronic form, the courts can further reduce the reliance on paper records by establishing electronic case filing systems. These systems enhance the accuracy, management and security of records, reduce delays in the flow of information and achieve cost savings for the judiciary, the bar and litigants.

### What is the cost for using MEC?

Please refer to Administrative Order No. 2011-AD-00001-SCT or Administrative Order No. 2011-AD-00001-SCT, which states “. . . that the Administrative Office of Courts (AOC) shall implement the billing component of Mississippi Electronic Courts (MEC), known as Public Access to Mississippi Electronic Courts (PAMEC). Effective July 1, 2011, users shall be charged a ten-dollar (\$10.00) annual registration/renewal fee and twenty cents (\$0.20) for each page viewed in the MEC system.”

## Who developed MEC?

All software for MEC was originally developed by the Administrative Office of the United States Courts. Modifications for implementation in Mississippi state courts have been made by an MEC project team.

## How do I get Help?

For help using MEC, visit <http://www.mssc.state.ms.us/mec/mec.html> or send email to the MEC Service Center at [helpdesk@mec.ms.gov](mailto:helpdesk@mec.ms.gov). Users may also contact the helpdesk by calling 601-576-4635.

## How are electronic documents served?

In most filings, the MEC system generates a Notice of Electronic Filing (an e-mail message containing a hyperlink to the document filed) when a document is filed with the court. For more information please refer to the Administrative Procedures.

## How do I get a copy of newlyfiled documents?

Each attorney of record in a case (including *pro se* litigants) will receive an e-mail message containing a hyperlink to a document that has been filed. Although *pro se* litigants must file all pleadings conventionally, some clerks may authorize those litigants to receive NEFs to track progress in a case. Attorneys are able to add up to five additional e-mail addresses for their filer login (under "Utilities/Maintain Your E-mail") so that their staff or interested parties will be notified of filings in all of that attorney's cases. The hyperlink to access the document will expire after the earlier of these two events: the first use or 15 days. Anytime that same hyperlink is accessed after it has expired; the user will be asked for their login credentials. All users are advised to print or save the document during the initial viewing period.

## How do I start receiving e-mail notices from MEC?

Users begin receiving email notices ("NEFs") once they have received their MEC credentials and they are associated with a case.

## Are there any limits to PAMEC usage?

Yes. Access privileges will be suspended for any account that causes an unacceptable level of congestion or a disruption to the operations of PAMEC, a court, or another PAMEC customer. PAMEC privileges will be terminated if, in the judgment of judiciary personnel, they are being misused. Your privileges will also be suspended if the annual user fee is delinquent or if you have an outstanding balance on your usage Invoice.

## Are there any limits to filing privileges?

The Administrative Procedures contain information related to filing privileges. In addition, passwords are issued to permit electronic filing and entry of data. Extracting data from MEC through any program, script or mechanism other than those provided by the court is strictly prohibited and may result in criminal prosecution or civil action. Electronic filing privileges may be suspended if, in the judgment of the court, they are being misused.

## **Can I get an exemption to filing electronically?**

Please refer to Administrative Procedures.

## **When is MEC available?**

The system is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week (except for routine or emergency maintenance). You should be able to file at any time. Scheduling of routine maintenance will be e-mailed to all MEC attorneys.

## **ACCESS-RELATED**

## **Can any member of the public use MEC to file documents with the court?**

Access to the filing segment of MEC is available to attorneys registered with MEC and authorized users only. Authorization and training of users is addressed in the Administrative Procedures.

## **How does an attorney become an authorized MEC user?**

In order for an attorney to be authorized to file documents electronically and to receive e-mail notices of documents that are filed, he/she must be admitted to practice in Mississippi and be registered to file electronically.

Visit <http://www.mssc.state.ms.us/mec/mec.html> to learn more about MEC, including registration information, filing requirements and administrative procedures, manuals, and other pertinent information. Upon registration with MEC, attorneys will be provided with an identification name and password that will allow access for the filing aspect of the system. During registration attorneys may elect for their MEC and PAMEC passwords to be the same.

Please note that attorneys must register for PAMEC in addition to requesting filing privileges in order to fully utilize the capabilities of the MEC system.

## **Are there separate logins and passwords for PAMEC and MEC?**

Yes. The system requires two separate login IDs and passwords. A PAMEC login ID is required for querying cases. Its format consists of two alpha characters followed by four numeric characters. An MEC login ID is required for attorneys to file documents and pleadings online.

## **What are the rules and procedures regarding filing electronically?**

Please refer to the Administrative Procedures.

## **What type of training will be available?**

Please refer to the MEC website for available training options.

## **My firm already has a PAMEC login and password. Do I need to establish a separate PAMEC account, or can I use the firm account?**

At this time MEC/PAMEC doesn't allow for firm accounts. At some point in the future MEC/PAMEC will allow for single firm account.

## **I am changing firms. Do I need to establish a new e-filing login and password?**

You do not need to register for MEC more than once. Even if you change firms, your login remains valid. However, you must update your contact information (address, email, etc.).

To update your contact information: Use the "Utilities" option of the MEC system to update your contact information with the court.

## **I am changing law firms. Do I need a new PAMEC login and password?**

If your current PAMEC account is shared among the firm you are leaving, then you must establish a new PAMEC account. A PAMEC account may be obtained by accessing the online registration feature at <http://www.mssc.state.ms.us/mec/mec.html>.

If your PAMEC account is not shared among staff at your current firm, it may move with you. You may update the contact information at the Account Information section.

## **How do I change my address with the Court?**

In MEC, click "Utilities" and "Maintain Your Accounts." You will be directed to the MEC and PAMEC Registration page where you initially registered. To change your address, phone number or law firm association, click the "Organization" button. To change your e-mail address or password, click the "Personal" button. Once all changes have been made, select "Save" at the bottom of the screen.

## **How do I change my MEC password?**

Once logged in, go to "Utilities" on the dark blue tool bar.

- Click "Maintain Your Accounts" in the "Your Account" section
- Click "MEC Password"
- Enter your new password in the box labeled "MEC Password" and then re-type the new password in "Confirm MEC Password".
- Click "Save"

## **Click "Log Out" at the bottom of the page., You will be redirected back to the MEC "Utilities" page. **Is there a way to combine MEC and PAMEC credentials so I don't have to remember more than one?****

You have the option of synching MEC and PAMEC passwords so they'll be the same. Once you opt to synch them, you will always log in to MEC with your MEC user ID (first/last lower-case initials, Bar number, upper-case M; i.e., ab103296M).and the password created in PAMEC. To synch your passwords:

- From the "Utilities" menu select "Your Account/Maintain Your Accounts"
- Select "MEC Password"

- The next screen presents your MEC User ID. In the check box instructing the user to “Click to keep your MEC password the same as your PAMEC password
- “Save”

### **Why do I get a second login screen after I've already logged into MEC?**

*This login prompt is requesting your PAMEC login and password, which is required whenever you request a report or document from a case. In order to bypass this login prompt in the future, click the box that says 'make this my default login' after entering the PAMEC login and password. Your MEC login and password will still need to be entered each time the MEC site is visited. THIS IS NO LONGER APPLICABLE*

### **Why am I getting an invalid login message?**

Look for a few of these common problems: If logging in to MEC, be sure that the only character capitalized in the user ID and password is the “M” after your Bar number. Verify that the recommended browser is being used which is a current version of either Firefox or Internet Explorer. Check the location of the website. The browser needs to be set to accept all cookies and must be JavaScript-enabled.

### **Why do I get an invalid login message once I have already logged into the court and I am retrieving a docket or document?**

Verify that the recommended browser is being used (current versions of either Firefox or Internet Explorer were the only browsers tested). Be sure to set your PC to accept all cookies. If the problem persists, delete your existing cookie files.. Select “Tools” on your toolbar and you should get a dropdown menu with “Internet Options” being the last option. Click “Internet Options.” Make sure you are on the “General” tab. Select “Browsing history” and click the “Delete” button., In the new window, delete “Temporary Internet files,” “History” and “Cookies.” Once those are checked click “Delete”.

### **What should we do when an attorney leaves the firm?**

When an attorney leaves a firm, both the attorney and the firm need to consider the implications to the MEC noticing system. If cases will move with the attorney, all the attorney needs to do is change his/her email notification set up and other contact information.

If cases will remain with the firm, the firm will need to ensure that the Court docket accurately reflects the proper attorney of record and that the new attorney of record is properly set up to receive e-mail notification. Law firms may also wish to consider the best method of handling e-mail addressed to the firm for the departed attorney. Summarily removing the attorney from the firm's e-mail system with no further action may result in notifications being missed. Firms may wish to consider whether their own e-mail systems should forward such e-mails to the attorney at his/her new address, or to another attorney within the firm.

### **Will I have the same filing login for all MEC courts in which I practice?**



Yes. A universal MEC log-in will be assigned which will be used in all courts which participate in MEC.

### ***How do I change my default PAMEC login?***

*Once you are logged in as an MEC filer, click on 'Utilities.' In Utilities, click on 'Change Your PAMEC Login.' Enter a new PAMEC login and password. You can change the default PAMEC login by checking the box 'Make this my default PAMEC login.' Once you associate a PAMEC login and a filer login, there is no way to un-associate the two without making another PAMEC login the default. This is no longer applicable*

### **Why am I receiving the message "you do not have permission to view this document"?**

Electronic access to case documents in certain types of cases is limited to parties in the case. When attempting to view these document types, MEC will display the message "you do not have permission to view this document." If you are an attorney of record or another party in the case, you must enter your MEC user ID before trying to access these documents. All others interested in these documents should contact the clerk's office for information about viewing copies. For a list of cases and documents with limited access, please see the Administrative Procedures.

## **TECHNICAL – GENERAL WEB ISSUES**

### **How can I search for a word or phrase on a web page?**

Once you select a document to review, you can perform a word search by clicking on EDIT, then clicking on either "Find and Replace," or "Find in Document" (or pressing Ctrl+F), and entering the word(s) you wish to locate in the document. For documents in PDF format (viewable using Adobe Acrobat Reader) search by clicking on "Tools," then "FIND" (or Ctrl+F), and proceed the same way. Note, if the PDF document is an image file, as opposed to a text file, searching the document is not possible. As the names imply, a text file is one created in the first instance using a word processing, spreadsheet, or similar program, while an image file is created by scanning a document using a document scanner or fax machine.

### **What is a "link" or "hyperlink?"**

A "link" or "hyperlink" is a shortcut to another website or web page. These are represented by a passage or phrase underlined in blue.

### **What is a plug-in?**

A plug-in is a small add-on piece of software that extends the capabilities of your web browser. A plug-in may, for example, enable you to view files written in a format other than HTML, the language used to create Internet web sites, or to listen to audio files or view videos.

### **How can I create a shortcut icon on my desktop that will take me directly to the MEC system?**

While on the Desktop screen, right click the mouse and then click on "new," followed by "shortcut." The next screen will ask for a command line. For example, to set up a shortcut to the MEC website, type "<http://www.mssc.state.ms.us/mec/mec.html>" in the space and then click "next." Change the name of the shortcut to MEC or some other designation of your choosing and then click "Finish."

## How do I cut, copy and paste?

Copying is the act of making a duplicate. Cutting is the act of removing something and placing (pasting) it in another location. (Deleting is the act of removing something entirely). Cutting sometimes works like deleting. Pasting is the act of placing anything that has been cut or copied into a new location. There are many ways to copy or cut, and paste, but all of them involve highlighting what you want to copy or cut first.

For a file, simply clicking on the file once will highlight it.

For text, position your cursor at the beginning of the text you want to cut or copy, hold the left mouse button down and drag the cursor to the end of the text you want to highlight, then release the mouse button. You may also highlight the text by positioning the cursor at the beginning/end of the text and holding down the "shift" key while using the directional keys to arrive at the last of the text.

To copy the highlighted item (3 options):

1. From the menu-bar at the top of any application, select Edit → Copy, -or-
2. Right-Click on the highlighted item and select Copy from the menu that appears—or-
3. On the keyboard, press Ctrl+C.

To cut the highlighted item (3 options)

1. From the menu-bar at the top of any application, select Edit → Cut, -or-
2. Right-Click on the highlighted item and select Cut from the menu that appears, -or-
3. On the keyboard, press Ctrl+X.

To paste the item you just copied or cut, position your cursor in the location it should be copied/cut and (3 options):

1. From the menu-bar at the top of any application, select Edit → Paste, -or-
2. Right-click where you want to place the highlighted item and select "Paste" from the menu that appears, -or-
3. On the keyboard, press Ctrl+V.

## How do I undo an edit command?

Make a mistake? Try any one of these to "undo" or revert to the last state. Some programs allow you to step-back many times, others allow only once, or none.

1. From the menu-bar at the top of any application, select Edit → Undo, -or-
2. On the keyboard, press Ctrl+Z.

## How do I redo an edit command?

Some applications also have a Re-do option, which "undoes the undo".

1. From the menu-bar at the top of any application, select Edit → Redo, -or-
2. On the keyboard, hit Ctrl+Y.

## **TECHNICAL – MEC ISSUES**

### **What hardware and software will attorneys need in order to participate in MEC?**

Attorneys will need the following hardware and software to electronically file, view, and retrieve documents in the electronic filing system.

- A personal computer with Windows or an Apple Macintosh (Mac) with internet access and a compatible browser. Click here to view the current browser standards for MEC. **(NO LINK)**
- Software to convert documents from a word processing format to a portable document format (PDF). Adobe Acrobat PDF Writer, as well as certain word processing programs can perform this function. Adobe Acrobat Version 5 and higher meet the MEC filing requirements. For viewing documents, not authoring them, only Adobe Acrobat Reader is needed.
- A word processing package like Mac or windows-based versions of WordPerfect and Microsoft Word whose output can be converted to PDF format.
- A scanner to make PDFs of documents that you have only in paper format.

### **My machine locks up at the login screen, but other attorneys at my firm don't have that problem—why me?**

If you get to the log-in screen and the system hangs when you try to complete your log-in, something is blocking the Secure Socket Layer (SSL) port 443 (that's the point where we transition from web port 80 to SSL port 443). The systems person at your firm needs to look at the router and any firewalls the firm has set up to determine where the blocking is taking place. Attorneys at a firm may experience this problem while other attorneys at the same firm do not, because they may be directed to different proxy servers.

### **Why does my session freeze?**

If you find your session “freezing” after you have selected "SUBMIT," try using the Back button to return to the previous screen and click SUBMIT again. It may be that the session has not truly halted; this kind of misbehavior is common to browser-based applications.

### **Why can I not access a previous page viewed by clicking on the "Back" button on the browser after selecting a link?**

Unlike most programs, a web browser will open multiple windows. In other words, two or more windows in which the browser appears may be active at the same time. Look at the tool bar at the bottom or top of the screen; this is the same bar where the start button is located. If the browser logo appears on two different buttons or tabs, you have more than one window open. Click the button or tab

that is not active (not highlighted) to open the previous window. If there is only one window open, click the down arrow next to the address bar at the very top of the screen; a drop-down menu will appear where you can click the address of the page to which you wish to return.

## **I receive a "Data Missing" error when I try to print reports from MEC - what does this mean?**

Some users have reported when trying to print large dockets or other reports from the MEC system that they received an error message stating: "Data Missing -This document resulted from a POST operation and has expired from the cache. If you wish you can repost the form data to recreate the document by pressing the reload button." To fix this problem, we recommend increasing the size of your cache dramatically. (How do you increase the size of your cache? Or is this done by deleting cookies and temp files)

## **Why won't the "data only" format of the cases report display in MEC?**

If you are using Internet Explorer and Windows XP with Service Pack 2, you may be having a problem downloading the "data only" format of the cases report. Two options are recommended to work around the problem.

1. Use Firefox. The report downloads using this browser.  
-or-
2. Delete the Windows XP registered file type for .txt files. To delete the registered file type in Windows XP, use the following steps:
  - Double click "My Computer".
  - Go to Tools, Folder options.
  - Click "File Types".
  - Find the "TXT" file type from the list and click on it.
  - Click Delete.
  - When the confirmation box is displayed, click Yes.
  - Click "OK" to close the File Options box.

## **Are there any special instructions regarding AOL users?**

The AOL internet connection will work for MEC, but the AOL provided browser is not supported. Please see the browser FAQs.

## **I have logged into MEC but I do not get all of the docket entries. Why is that happening?**

The cache on your computer may be full. Cache is a location on your hard drive where data is stored. When you search the Internet, your computer keeps track of every page you have visited and saves this information on your hard drive. If this file becomes large (i.e., many pages have been searched), the result may be a loss of data.

## Why are some menu options not appearing, or the window is blank?

Right click in the window and select Reload Frame (Firefox) or Refresh (IE). If that does not display all options, clear the cache or temporary internet files.

## Which browsers work with MEC?

Current versions of the following browsers have been tested and approved for use with MEC:

- Firefox 3
- Internet Explorer 6 and 7

The following have not been tested with MEC but seem to work:

- Opera
- Google Chrome

## Which browsers are not compatible with MEC?

- Netscape
- Internet Explorer 5.0 and below
- AOL browser
- MSN browser

## Can I use the Mozilla or Firefox browsers?

Firefox is supported. The Mozilla browser is not "officially supported" but many users use it with success with MEC. You should have access to an 'officially supported' browser.

## Can I use the MSN Explorer browser?

No. The MSN provided browser is different from Internet Explorer and is not supported and does not work with MEC. You can use MSN for connecting to the internet, but you must use either Firefox or Internet Explorer for MEC.

## Have you experienced problems downloading audio files from MEC?

*Some users have reported problems when attempting to download large audio files from the MEC system using both Internet Explorer and Firefox. The problem reported is that the browser appears to download the PDF with the embedded audio file but freezes at some point during the download. The judiciary has duplicated the issue and recommends having Acrobat open outside of the browser to solve the problem. This setting can be changed in the Internet preference area of Acrobat that can be found under the 'Edit' menu. For example, to change the setting in Adobe Acrobat 8 Professional, do the following: Is this section applicable or do we see it becoming applicable in the future?*

1. Open Adobe Acrobat.
2. Click Edit
3. Click Preferences.
4. When the preference box opens, click Internet.
5. Uncheck 'Display PDF in browser'.

6. Click 'OK'.

## **TECHNICAL – PDF RELATED**

### **What is a PDF document?**

Documents in Portable Document File (PDF) format do not require a copy of the word processing program used to create them in order to be viewed. They can be viewed by anyone with a free viewer such as Acrobat Reader, a product of Adobe Systems, Inc. In addition to its cross platform advantage, a PDF document matches very closely the format of the original document in which the PDF document was created. All of the pleadings in the MEC system are stored in PDF format. To view PDF files, you must have a PDF viewing software such as Acrobat Reader, which you may download free from the Adobe website <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html>. You will view PDF documents the way they were created, and you may save and print them in that format.

### **What is Adobe Acrobat?**

Adobe Acrobat is a commercial software product from Adobe that allows you to view and create documents in PDF (portable document format). Adobe, the inventors of the PDF format, can be found at <http://www.adobe.com>, where you can find both the free reader version of the software, which can be used to retrieve documents from MEC, and the writer version, which can create documents for posting. There are other brands of commercially available software to create PDF files, and the MEC's only requirement is that filings must be in PDF to be accepted by the MEC system. All documents filed in MEC must be in PDF format. MEC does not endorse any specific software.

### **How do I make a PDF document?**

There are several ways in which you can get a document from a word processing program into the PDF format. The newer versions of some common word processors include the ability to publish a document to PDF built right into the word-processing software. In WordPerfect 9 and 10, you can click on File and then "Publish to PDF" to convert your WordPerfect file (.wpd) to PDF. MS-Word (up to version XP) does NOT have this capability. Adobe, the inventors of the PDF format, can be found at <http://www.adobe.com>, where you can find both the free reader version of the software, which can be used to retrieve documents from MEC, and the writer version, which can create documents for posting. When you've installed Acrobat, you can make PDF files right out of your word-processing software simply by "printing" the document, and selecting the "printer" called "Acrobat PDF Writer" from the drop down list of available printers. That process will actually save a file in PDF format, with a ".pdf" file extension, on your hard drive. There are many other vendors besides Adobe who provide software to create PDF documents. Please note that MEC does not endorse or recommend any specific PDF software. Since there are so many different applications, and we could not depict instructions for all, we have chosen to depict all our instructions with reference to Adobe. You can find additional information on Adobe use at, <http://blogs.adobe.com/acrolaw/>.

## **I tried to scan my document into PDF but a lot of errors appeared.**

You are probably trying to scan the document using optical character recognition (OCR)--don't do this. PDF can handle both text and scanned documents. It can also take scanned documents and perform OCR on them, turning the image back into editable text. However, this process has many problems and should not be done before e-filing them. It is permissible to perform OCR on PDF documents after they are in the e-filing system, since any OCR errors will not be placed in the official documents at the court.

## **How do you start the Adobe Acrobat Reader program in order to view a PDF document on a website?**

Adobe Acrobat Reader is a plugin that the browser will automatically launch when you try to access a document stored in PDF format. If you do not have the Adobe Reader, your computer will show you a set of applications from which to choose a program that will read the file. None of them will work, which is why you must download the Adobe Reader from Adobe Systems' website. To download a free copy of Acrobat Reader, click on <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html>.

## **Is it possible to have the Adobe Acrobat Reader open in a separate window, one not a part of my browser, or, alternatively, if the Adobe Reader opens on my PC as a separate Window, is it possible to make it open within the browser?**

The answer to both questions is "yes." In Adobe Acrobat 5.0 or the Adobe Reader 5.0, click on "File", then "Preferences", then "General". In the "Options" section at the bottom of the window labeled "General Preferences," check the box (by clicking on it if it is blank) beside "Web Browser Integration" to make a PDF document open within the browser. Uncheck that box (by clicking on it if it is checked) to cause Acrobat or the Adobe Reader to open in a separate window.

In Adobe Acrobat 7.0 or the Adobe Reader 7.0, click on "Edit" and then "Preferences". Click on "Internet" in the "Categories" list on the left-hand side of the screen. In the Web Browser Option panel, check the box (by clicking on it if it is blank) beside "Display PDF in Browser" to make a PDF document open within the browser. Uncheck that box (by clicking on it if it is checked) to cause Acrobat or the Adobe Reader to open in a separate window.

## **Is the optimum way of viewing PDF files within the browser or in a separate window?**

This is more of a matter of personal preference. Some of the functionality of the Reader is lost when the PDF document is opened in a browser window. However, most of the functions accessible either using the menu or shortcuts when the Reader opens in its own window can be accessed using the various button icons that remain available when the Reader is opened within the browser.

## **When I print an image from MEC, the right edge gets cut off.**

After you click the print icon, click the 'shrink to fit' box on the printer setup screen. Once the setting has been changed, it should remain this way for all PDF documents.

## **How do I copy a PDF text file to my word processor?**

If a PDF document contains text, as opposed to an image, you can select text and do a normal copy and paste. Using the Acrobat Reader, one can select no more than a page at a time.

## **Can I use Adobe Acrobat 5.0?**

Test results indicate that court personnel and lawyers can use Version 5 PDF documents without adverse effects to MEC. It should be noted that MEC does not endorse any specific software, just the use of the PDF.

## **I am using Adobe Acrobat 5. When I try to view PDF documents in MEC, I see a blank screen. How can I fix this?**

In Adobe 5.0 or 6.0, make the following changes: Go to Edit – Preferences – Options. Uncheck ‘Display PD in Browser’. Uncheck ‘Allow Fast Web View’.

## **The Administrative Procedures have a limitation on the size of submitted PDF documents. What can I do to ensure I don’t exceed the limit?**

When creating PDF documents for the purpose of filing in MEC, it is recommended they be converted directly from the word processing program. Usually only very large WordPerfect or Word documents converted to PDF will have size limitation problems. You will more frequently run into size issues when scanning documents. When scanning, be sure to set your scanner to black and white and 200 dpi. If your scanned document is larger than the limit, you can separate it into multiple smaller files. To check the size of the file, right click on the file and select properties. You must save a scanned document to PDF; only PDF documents can be filed.

## **Why are my PDF documents blank when I print them?**

It's possible you will need to install a postscript print driver. These drivers are available from your printer manufacturer’s website.

## **When I print my PDF document, why is it a mirror image?**

If using Adobe Acrobat 5, make the following adjustment: select the Print command, check the box next to the option "Print as Image" which is located in the print status window next to the printer name. If using Adobe Acrobat 6, select the Print command then select the “Advanced” button located at the bottom left corner of the print status window, then select “Print as Image.” You may want to turn this setting off when printing in the future because it can slow down a large print job.

## **When filing documents electronically, why do I get the message “ERROR: this document has security measures in effect?”**

The system will not accept documents which have security measures turned on (for example, password protection in Adobe.) Remove the security features from the document and submit your document again.



## **Why do I get the message “Error reading, linearized hint data?”**

If you are using Adobe Reader the settings may need to be changed in order to view the document. Go to Edit, Preferences, Internet, and uncheck "Allow Fast Web View."

## **I want to copy and paste from a PDF document, but I can't seem to select any text. How do I copy and paste?**

If you are using an Adobe product, you must first select the text tool (look for the T on the toolbar) instead of the hand. Then select the text, and either right-click and choose copy, or use the copy icon. If you cannot select the text, then the PDF is a scanned image. Scanned documents in PDF act just like photographs. You will not be able to copy and paste from a scanned image.

## **My document seems to change when I make it into PDF; what's happening?**

This is called "flowing". Depending on the font, the printer selected, and other characteristics of the content, a document may undergo some changes when it's rendered into PDF. If you are using an Adobe product to convert documents to PDF, visit [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com). Adobe has a set of technical documents posted on their site that refer directly to ways in which you may attempt to address flowing problems.

Another work-around is to set your PDF printer as your "Default Printer" before opening the document, then open the document, edit it to correct any format errors, save it and try printing (converting) to PDF again.

## **Is it true that the only way to make a document into PDF format is by using a scanner?**

No. In fact, the vast majority of documents can be easily converted to PDF format without scanning. Any document that you create on your computer can be converted to PDF by your computer as long as you have the appropriate software installed and configured properly.

## **How do you determine which version of Acrobat Reader is installed on your computer?**

Launch Acrobat Reader, select "Help" menu option, and select "About Acrobat Reader." If you are using version 5.0.5 or higher, you do not need to upgrade. If you are using version 4 or below, please visit Adobe's website at <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html> to download a free upgrade to the latest version of Acrobat Reader.

## **TECHNICAL – NOTICE OF ELECTRONIC FILING**

### **How do I receive my copy of a filed document?**

Each attorney of record in a case (including pro se litigants) will receive an email message containing a hyperlink to a document that has been filed. Attorneys are able to list up to five additional email addresses for their filer login so that interested parties can be notified of filings as well. The hyperlink to access the document will expire after the earlier of these two events: the first use or 15 days. Any time that same hyperlink is accessed after it has expired, the user will be asked for a PAMEC login to view the document. All users are advised to print or save the document during the initial viewing period.

- When clicking on the document link for the first time, it will display the document. The system should not prompt you for a login unless the document is restricted. If you use the link a second time, you will be asked for a PAMEC login to view the document.
- If the document is for certain case types or is restricted, the system will prompt you for a login. Always enter your MEC login/password. If you login using the PAMEC account you will lose this copy. (since it requires a login will the additional emails still get a free look?)
- If clicking on the case number link, it will display the Docket Report. If you have not already logged into PAMEC, you will receive a login prompt.

### **Who receives the automatic email notification?**

The email notification goes to the email address of the registered attorney(s) of record and all email accounts an attorney has listed as recipients of additional notices. Recipients who have identified a case as being of interest may also receive notification.

### **Is there a time limit for when the copy from the NEF expires?**

Yes. 15 days.

### **If being served by email, is there an option available to notify the system you are away and will not be receiving emails?**

Attorneys can change their email address at any time using the Utilities menu option and change the main email receiver to someone else. The system cannot hold the emails while attorneys are out of the office.

### **Can an attorney's support staff receive a copy of the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF)?**

Yes. Attorneys have the option of authorizing duplicate receipt of the NEF for up to 5 members of his/her support staff. The attorney can add the additional email recipients under the "Utilities" menu option. Click on "Utilities", "Maintain Your Account", "Email Information", then add additional addresses to the section "Secondary Addresses". Click on "Return to Account" screen. Click on "Submit".

### **Will I need a PAMEC login if I click on the docket sheet report hyperlink located in the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF)?**

*Yes. Clicking on the docket sheet hyperlink found in the NEF will cause a PAMEC login screen to appear if you have not already logged into PAMEC. Once you have completed the login screen you will be presented with the current docket sheet for that case. (Is this correct?)*

## **How do I save the copy of the filed document?**

MEC participants receive an email notification of activity in each of their cases. The email notification contains a link to the filed document as part of the MEC program. It may be advantageous for the recipient to save the document to view or print at a later time.

The following instructions apply from the point where you view the email message containing the attached PDF document.

**CAUTION:** To save the PDF document as described below, make sure the Acrobat Reader is opening in your Web browser, not as a separate window.

1. Click on the link to the document found in the email verification notice.
2. The document loads into Adobe Reader.
3. A toolbar with a diskette icon appears at the top of the Adobe Reader screen.
4. Click on the diskette icon.
5. A dialogue box entitle 'Save As' appears over the document.
6. Complete the following data fields:
  - Save in: Designate the drive and directory to save the file.
  - File name: Name the file. Example: Public, JQstaymotion.pdf.
  - Save as type: Leave at Acrobat (\*.pdf) default.
7. Click the Save button to store the document in the drive and folder you designated.
8. You can now view or print the document at a later time.

## **Are there any reasons why I wouldn't receive my MEC generated NEF emails?**

The most common reason for non-delivery of MEC emails is that the email has been identified as spam either by the recipient or automatically by the ISP. If a recipient inadvertently identified a previous MEC email as spam, the ISP may be blocking email from MEC. Contact your ISP to rectify this situation. Some ISPs may automatically route MEC email to a junk mail folder. Go into your junk mail folder and mark the email from the court as "not junk mail."

## **When I click on the link in my email, why am I prompted for a login?**

There are 3 reasons you will be prompted to login after clicking the link:

- If it is a certain case type or a restricted document, you will need to enter your MEC filer ID so the system can verify you are an attorney of record.
- If 15 days have elapsed since the document was filed, the link has expired and you will be required to log in.
- If the link has been used.

## **When I click on the link in my email, why do I get a blank screen?**

It is possible some of the settings on your PDF viewer are incorrect. If you are using an Adobe product, try the following: Edit, Preferences, Internet, uncheck 'Allow Fast Web View' and 'Display PDF in Browser'.

## **I click on the document number link and nothing happens. Why?**

If you are using AOL mail and the AOL browser, you should change the email notification from HTML to text.

## **Can I get a daily summary of docketing activities rather than receive a notice for each filing?**

Two noticing options are available: a daily summary or individual event notice. The default delivery method is an individual NEF in HTML format. You can change your preference through the Email Maintenance screen (available through Maintain User Accounts, Maintain Your Account, and other places on the Utilities menu in MEC) after logging on to the MEC website. The following options are available:

- Change the delivery method preference from Individual NEFs to receiving one Daily Summary NEF for an email address.
- Specify Delivery Method Exceptions. This means that if the delivery method is set for an address to receive Individual NEFs, you can define a specific list of cases for which notice of activity will be received only via a Daily Summary. You will continue to receive Individual NEFs for activity in all other cases. If receiving a Daily Summary is the preferred delivery method, then the email address associated with the cases defined in this list would receive Individual NEFs.

## **CASE RELATED**

### **How can I verify whether or not all the documents I filed electronically were posted?**

To ensure the documents transmitted arrive in their entirety, it is important to examine the document after it is received by MEC. This can be done by viewing the docket sheet for the case and selecting the transmitted document. The number of the transmitted document appears on your electronic filing receipt in MEC.

### **Must I register before I can file through MEC?**

Yes. You cannot file through MEC until you register.

### **When I query a case in MEC, it gives me the previous case I looked at instead.**

Check your Cache settings in your browser. The "verify documents" entry should have the 'once per session' or 'every time' entry checked, but not the 'never' entry. (Where are the Cache Settings located)

## **I tried to file a document but it says "format not recognized"—what am I doing wrong?**

All documents must be submitted in Adobe PDF (portable document format) with an extension of ".pdf". Two common errors occur. First, a user thinks that he/she saved the document in PDF, the user then tries to file the WordPerfect version of the document; not the saved PDF version. Second, a user fails to indicate the full path name for the PDF file he/she wants to upload. Because the system could not find the file, it responded with the "format not recognized" message. The solution--provide the full path name when identifying the file (example: "c:\documents\motion.pdf") during the upload process.

## **Are there procedural rules relating to electronic filing?**

Rule 5 of the Mississippi Rules of Civil Procedure, Rule 1.16 of the Uniform Rules of Circuit and County Court Practice, and Rule 1.13 of the Uniform Chancery Court Rules authorize individual courts by local rule to permit papers to be filed by electronic means.

## **When a user files a pleading with the court, does the system automatically serve the other parties or does the user have to do something extra to serve the others? And, do the other parties just get notification of a filing or do they get the actual document?**

When a document is filed in MEC, a Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) is automatically generated and emailed to the registered parties in the case. The NEF includes the text of the docket entry, the unique electronic document stamp, a list of the case participants receiving email notification of the filing, and hyperlink to the document(s) filed. (This does not work this way in all the courts)

## **How will signature of documents be handled for documents filed electronically?**

Please see the Administrative Procedures.

## **Can an attorney access any other cases besides his/her own?**

Most cases are available for remote access by all PAMEC users. There are certain restricted case types and documents (see the Administrative Procedures) where only the attorney of record can access the case remotely.

## **What is the Cases report and how do I use it?**

The Cases report in MEC is used to display summary data for a range of cases. It can be used to produce a list of open or closed cases between a date range. For example, it can be used to produce a list of cases

filed or discharged. In addition, there are a number of options to help limit the results. The Cases report can be found under the Reports menu option in MEC.

### **How do we know who is participating electronically on a case?**

The Utilities menu option in MEC has a miscellaneous option to view mailing information. Attorneys may use this function to determine who is receiving service electronically and who is receiving service conventionally.

### **I made a mistake, such as filing in the wrong case or submitting the wrong document. What should I do?**

You cannot delete or edit filings after they have been submitted through MEC. If you made an error (filed in the wrong case, submitted the wrong version of a document, etc.) contact the clerk's office.

Instructions for Downloading the Invoice to Excel