

# APPENDIX: PARTY ENTRY GUIDE

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The most critical piece of CIVIL CASE OPENING is the entry of party names. It is important that parties are entered correctly because it not only impacts your case, but the general records of the court. Please take a moment to review the following guidelines closely.

## Before You Start

Before searching for or entering a party in a case, there are a few things to know:

1. **All party names must be entered in ALL CAPS.**
2. Party names must be entered in the case in the order they appear in the caption of the complaint.
3. Party names added to the case should match the caption of the complaint exactly.
4. If the complaint contains more than 50 plaintiffs, add only the first 50 plaintiffs to the case.
5. ALL defendants must be added to the case, no matter how many appear in the complaint.
6. As you click through the case opening program, you will be offered a "Search for a party" screen where you will have the opportunity to enter the **Last Name, First Name and Middle Name** of the party.
7. Names of companies, organizations, government agencies, etc., are entered in the **Last Name** field ONLY.
8. Do not include the words "The," "An" or "A" when searching for or entering a company or business name (if applicable).
9. Do not add addresses to any party.

## Searching For a Party

You must first search to see if the party is already in the ECF database. If you add a party and it should not have been added, this may delay your case being available to the court while the error is corrected. Please utilize the following SEARCH hints:

1. For a person, enter the first few letters of the last name followed by an \* (which acts as a wild card) in the **Last Name** field, and the first few letters of the first name followed by an \* in the **First Name** field and click **[Search]**.
  - a. For instance, when searching for **JAMES HARRINGTON**, you might enter *HARR\** in the **Last Name** field, and *JAM\** in the **First Name** field.
    - i. This search brings up four possible matches:
      1. **HARRINGTON, JAMES**
      2. HARRINGTON, JAMES T.
      3. HARRINGTON, JAMES CORNELL
      4. HARRINGTON, JAMES CORNEL
2. For a company, organization, or government agency, enter the first few letters or words of the party name followed by an \* in the **Last Name** field and click **[Search]**.
  - a. For instance, when searching for the party **ELI LILLY AND COMPANY**, you might enter *ELI L\** into the **Last Name** field.

- i. This search brings up three possible matches:
      1. ELI LILLY & COMPANY
      2. ELI LILLY & COMPANY, INC.
      3. **ELI LILLY AND COMPANY**
    - b. When searching for the party **THE BOEING COMPANY**, drop "The" from the name and enter *BOEI\** into the Last Name field.
      - i. This search brings up three possible matches:
        1. BOEING
        2. BOEING AIRCRAFT CO
        3. **BOEING COMPANY**
  3. Try to avoid entering punctuation into the search fields as this could adversely affect the search results.
    - a. For instance, when searching for **U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**, you might enter *U\*S\* DEPARTMENT OF HOM\** into the **Last Name** field.
      - i. This search brings up five possible matches:
        1. U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
        2. U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY/ICE
        3. **U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**
        4. UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
        5. UNITED STATES DEPARTMNET OF HOMELAND SECURITY  
TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
  4. Be sure to scroll through all search results and select the one that best matches your complaint.
  5. If the exact same party name appears multiple times in your search results, select the **first** match from the list of duplicates.
  6. If a match is found, select the party name and click **[Select Party]** and proceed to the section on **Selecting an Existing Party** below.
  7. Should you not locate a match AFTER performing the search, you may enter the new party into the ECF database by clicking **[Create New Party]** and proceeding to the section on **Entering a New Party** on page 4.

## Selecting an Existing Party

If the name of the party you are searching for **does** come up in the search results, select the party name and click **[Select Party]**. Then follow these guidelines to add the **Role** and **Party Text**:

### **ROLE:**

1. Select one of the following role types from the **Role** drop-down menu:
  - a. Plaintiff
  - b. Defendant
  - c. Petitioner
  - d. Respondent
2. The **Role** will default to *Defendant*, so please be sure to select another role type, if applicable.

**PARTY TEXT:**

1. The **Party Text** field is used for optional descriptive language added to enhance or distinguish the party named in the complaint.
  - a. Example: *in her official capacity as Secretary of State*
2. Only add **Party Text** if it appears in the caption of your complaint.
3. Do not get creative or verbose with party text.

**Parties Already in the System**

If you cannot find any of the parties listed below, please call the Clerk's Office to assist with the search. It is very rare that you would not be able to locate an agency/representative of a government or state, or major companies in a search. To assist you, note the following names/categories are already in the system:

- **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA** (Do not use USA)
- Current and past Presidents, unless newly elected
- Any government agency
- Congressional Members, unless newly elected
- U.S. Cabinet Members
- **DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**
- Current and past Mayors of DC, unless newly elected
- Any DC agency
- **WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY** or **WMATA**
- International Associations of Machinists, etc.
- International Brotherhood of Painters, etc.
- Drug Companies
- Car Companies
- Universities
- Hospitals
- **AMTRAK, CSX CORPORATION, NORFOLK SOUTHERN CORP.**, etc.
- Major stores such as **CVS, SAFEWAY, TARGET CORP., GIANT FOOD, INC.**, etc.

**SIMILAR PARTY NAMES:** When a party name is listed in the complaint in a format that is slightly different from an existing party name in the database, add or select the exact name of the party as shown on the complaint.

**Example: JUDICIAL WATCH INC.**

1. JUDICIAL WATCH INC. (no comma) is listed as the party on the complaint.
2. JUDICIAL WATCH, INC. (with comma) comes up in the list of search results.
3. Add **JUDICIAL WATCH INC.** (no comma) to the ECF database as a new party, so that it exactly matches the name on the complaint.

## Entering a New Party

If the name of the party you are searching for **does not** come up in the search results, click [**Create New Party**] and follow these guidelines to add the party to the ECF database:

1. Enter the **Last Name, First Name** and **Middle Name** in **ALL CAPS!!!**
2. Example: **JAMES EARL JONES** would be entered as:
  - a. **Last Name: JONES**
  - b. **First Name: JAMES**
  - c. **Middle Name: EARL**
3. Middle initials should always be followed by a period (e.g. R.).
4. Enter the **Generation** in ALL CAPS and include a period, where applicable (e.g. JR., SR., III, etc.).
5. Leave the **Title** field blank at all times.
6. Do not enter the address, phone number, email, etc., of the party.
7. Select the proper **Role** of the party. (*Refer to instructions in **Selecting an Existing Party** on page 3*).
8. Enter **Party Text**, if applicable. (*Refer to instructions in **Selecting an Existing Party** on page 3*).

## Companies or Businesses

When entering a new company or business name in the ECF database, utilize the following guidelines.

1. Drop words such as "The," "An" or "A" that may precede the official name of the company/business.
2. Enter the full name of the company/business in the **Last Name** field.
3. Do not use the **First Name** or **Middle Name** fields at all.
4. Include punctuation as it appears on the complaint.

**Example: THE TRAVELERS COMPANIES**

Last Name: **TRAVELERS COMPANIES**

**Example: PAPA JOHN'S USA, INC.**

Last Name: **PAPA JOHN'S USA, INC.**

## United States of America

When naming the United States of America as a party in a civil case, always use **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (not USA)** as the party name. USA is reserved for criminal cases. Also, please note that **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA** is an established party in ECF, and you should **never** have to add it to the database.

## Hispanic Names

When entering parties with Hispanic names, the father's surname, or in the case of a married woman, the husband's surname, is always used as the **Last Name**.

**Example (Male): CARLOS ARLEY CORTES RODRIGUEZ**

First Name: **CARLOS**

Middle Name: **ARLEY**

Last Name: **CORTES RODRIGUEZ**

**Example (Single Female): SONIA ISABEL CORTES RODRIGUEZ**

First Name: **SONIA**

Middle Name: **ISABEL**

Last Name: **CORTES RODRIGUEZ**

**Example (Married Female): DELORES VILLEGAS DE RODRIGUEZ**

First Name: **DELORES**

Middle Name: **(blank)**

Last Name: **VILLEGAS DE RODRIGUEZ**

## Unknown First Names

When entering a party name that does not include a first name or the first name is unknown or fictitious, search **only** by the **Last Name**, and do not add anything to the **First Name** field.

**Example: MPD Officer RICHMOND**

Last Name: **RICHMOND**

First Name: **(blank)**

Middle Name: **(blank)**

Party Text: ***MPD Officer***

**Example: HARLTON**

Last Name: **HARLTON**  
First Name: **(blank)**  
Middle Name: **(blank)**  
Party Text: **(blank)**

**Websites**

Websites are entered including the “WWW” preceding the name of the site.

**Example: [WWW.FACEBOOK.COM](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM)**

Last Name: **WWW.FACEBOOK.COM**

**Hyphenated Names**

Hyphenated last names of a person are entered in the **Last Name** field.

**Example: JOHN J. JOHNS-SMITH**

Last Name: **JONES-SMITH**  
First Name: **JOHN**  
Middle Name: **J.**

**John/Jane Does**

When entering a John or Jane Doe as a party to the case, be sure to select one of the existing party names in the ECF database, as there should be no reason to create a new party. For a large group of Does, add the number (e.g. 1-246) in **Party Text**. (The number of Does should NOT be part of the party name, regardless of what you might see on the search results list).

**Example: JOHN DOE**

Last Name: **DOE**  
First Name: **JOHN**  
Middle Name: **(blank)**

**Example: JOHN AND JANE DOES**

Last Name: **DOES**  
First Name: **JOHN AND JANE**  
Middle Name: **(blank)**

**Example: DOES, 1-495**

Last Name: **DOES**  
First Name: **(blank)**  
Middle Name: **(blank)**  
Party Text: **1-495**

**Example: XYZ COMPANIES, 1-36**

Last Name: **XYZ COMPANIES**  
Party Text: **1-36**

## Real Property

When entering real property, enter the full address or property description in the **Last Name** field as it appears on the complaint (with punctuation and abbreviations).

**Example: 123 FIFTH ST., NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20000**

Last Name: **123 FIFTH ST., NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20000**

## Bank Accounts

Enter the bank account number/description in the **Last Name** field, and any additional information (e.g. name on the account) in **Party Text**. (**Note:** Please review Privacy Information regarding redaction of financial records.)

**Example: BANK OF AMERICA ACCOUNT #XXXX9999 in the name of Sally Sue Jones**

Last Name: **BANK OF AMERICAN ACCOUNT #XXXX9999**  
Party Text: ***in the name of Sally Sue Jones***

## Vehicles

Enter the vehicle name/description in the **Last Name** field, and any additional information (e.g. VIN number) in **Party Text**.

**Example:** RED 1910 CHEVROLET ANTIQUE MODEL CAR with license plate VA 919191

Last Name: RED 1910 CHEVROLET ANTIQUE MODEL CAR

Party Text: *with license plate VA 919191*

**Example:** ONE 2004 LINCOLN NAVIGATOR, VIN: 5XXXX28X74XX14200

Last Name: ONE 2004 LINCOLN NAVIGATOR

Party Text: *VIN: 5XXXX28X74XX14200*

## Vessels

Enter the vessel name/description in the **Last Name** field, and any additional information in **Party Text**.

**Example:** THE PRESIDENTIAL YACHT, Official Government No. Pres1020

Last Name: PRESIDENTIAL YACHT

Party Text: *Official Government No. Pres1020*

## Estates

If an estate is a named plaintiff or defendant in a case, enter the estate in the **Last Name** field as it appears on the complaint. If applicable, add additional plaintiffs/defendants (e.g. executors or personal representatives) using the **Last Name**, **First Name**, and **Middle Name** fields in the order they appear on the complaint. Enter any descriptive information as **Party Text**.

**Example:** ESTATE OF JOHN JOHNSON

Last Name: ESTATE OF JOHN JOHNSON

Party Text: *by and through its Administrator, Jane Johnson*

**Example:** JANE JOHNSON

Last Name: JOHNSON

First Name: JANE

Middle Name: **(blank)**

Party Text: ***As Administrator of the Estate of John Johnson***

## Unions and Trustees as Parties

If the plaintiffs are a combination of unions and trustees, enter the first named plaintiff, which should be the name of the union, in the **Last Name** field. (**Note:** Many unions already exist as parties in the ECF system, so be sure to conduct a thorough name search first before adding a union as a new party). Enter the remainder of the plaintiffs/trustees in **Party Text**.

**Example:** **INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF PAINTERS AND ALLIED TRADES UNION AND INDUSTRY PENSION FUND**

Last Name: **INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF PAINTERS AND ALLIED TRADES UNION AND INDUSTRY PENSION FUND**

Party Text: ***A.G. Monroe, Patrick Lane, Fred C. Hagen, Michael Monroe, as Employer Trustees***

If the union itself is not a named plaintiff in the case, enter the individual trustee parties using the **Last Name**, **First Name**, and **Middle Name** fields as described in earlier sections of these instructions. Add any descriptive language as **Party Text** for the last named plaintiff only. (Do not enter it for every plaintiff).

**Example (last named plaintiff): WILLIAM MCCONNELL**

Last Name: **MCCONNELL**

First Name: **WILLIAM**

Middle Name: **(blank)**

Party Text: ***As Trustees of, and on behalf of, the BRICKLAYERS & TROWEL***

***TRADES INTERNATIONAL PENSION FUND and As Trustees of, and on behalf of, the INTERNATIONAL MASONRY INSTITUTE***

## Abbreviations

When acronyms are used to abbreviate the name of a party in the complaint, do not use periods to separate the acronym.

**Example:** Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority is **WMATA** and not W.M.A.T.A.

## Names of Minors

For privacy purposes, a minor's name should be abbreviated using only their initials wherever possible. Add the initials in capital letters in the **Last Name** field, separated by periods, but not spaces.

**Example: S.A.J., a minor**

Last Name:           **S.A.J.**  
Party Text:           ***a minor***

**Example: JOHN JOHNSON, Next Friend of S.A.J, a minor**

Last Name:           **JOHNSON**  
First Name:          **JOHN**  
Middle Name:        **(blank)**  
Party Text:           ***Next friend of S.A.J., a minor***

## Cities, Counties and States

Enter a city, county or state in the **Last Name** field as it appears on the complaint. (Note: Many cities, counties and states already exist as parties in the ECF system, so be sure to conduct a thorough name search first before adding a new party).

**Example: STATE OF MARYLAND**

Last Name:        **STATE OF MARYLAND**

**Example: PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY**

Last Name:        **PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY**

**Example: CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VA**

Last Name:        **CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VA**

## Aliases

If a party has an alias, enter the name in ALL CAPS and follow the same guidelines as if entering a regular party name. Begin by clicking on the “**Add Alias**” icon under the party name and performing a name search. Once you have selected an existing alias or adding a new one, choose the type of alias from the **Type** drop-down menu.

**Example: MARK CRUZ, also known as “MARKY MARK”**

Last Name:	<b>CRUZ</b>
First Name:	<b>MARK</b>
Alias Last/Business Name:	<b>MARKY MARK</b>
Alias Type:	<b>aka</b>

**Example: SMITH, SMYTHE AND SMITHY, doing business as SS&S**

Last Name:	<b>SMITH, SMYTHE AND SMITHY</b>
Alias Last/Business Name:	<b>SS&amp;S</b>
Alias Type:	<b>dba</b>

Choose one of the following aliases from the **Type** drop-down menu:

agent	= agent
aka	= also known as
dba	= doing business as
fdba	= formerly doing business as
fka	= formerly known as
ino	= in the name of (unknown)
nee	= born
nka	= now known as
obo	= on behalf of
other	= other
rpi	= real party in interest
scr	= successor to
ta	= trading as

## Party Roles

2255 (Do Not Use - Court Only)  
Amicus (Do Not Use – Leave of Court Required)  
Appellant  
Appellee  
Arbitrator  
Claimant  
Do not use any of the Consol Roles  
Counter Claimant  
Counter Defendant  
Creditor  
Cross Claimant  
Cross Defendant  
Debtor  
Debtor-in-Possession  
Defendant  
Fourth Party Defendant  
Fourth Party Plaintiff  
Garnishee  
In Re  
Interested Party  
Interpleader  
Intervenor (Do Not Use – Leave of Court Required)  
Intervenor Defendant (Do Not Use – Leave of Court Required)  
Intervenor Plaintiff (Do Not Use – Leave of Court Required)  
Lead Plaintiffs (Do Not Use-Court Only)  
Material Witness (Do Not Use-Court Only)  
Mediator (Do Not Use-Court Only)  
Movant  
Non-Party Petitioner  
Objector  
Petitioner  
Plaintiff  
Receiver  
Respondent  
Special Master(Do Not Use-Court Only)  
Tax Payer (Do Not Use-Court Only)  
Third Party Defendant  
Third Party Plaintiff  
Trustee  
Federal Defendant for Service Only (Do Not Use)  
Nonparty