

U.S. DISTRICT AND BANKRUPTCY COURTS FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Civil Case Opening Pointers

DOs:

- DO enter party names in ALL CAPITAL LETTERS.
- DO search for party names first before adding a new party to the database.
- DO change the role of each party from *2255 government* to *plaintiff* or *defendant*.
- DO add party text if included in the caption of the complaint/notice of removal (i.e., *Secretary of State, a Delaware Corporation, etc.*).
- DO add the first 50 plaintiffs and ALL defendants to the case.
- DO pay the filing fee via pay.gov (unless you are filing the case on behalf of the U.S. Government).
- DO attach the civil cover sheet (ours), exhibits and summons to the complaint/notice of removal.
- DO file the complaint/notice of removal the same day the case is opened.
- DO use your ECF login/password to FILE a document.
- DO use your PACER login/password to VIEW a document or docket sheet.

DO NOTs:

- DO NOT file electronically any sealed complaints, complaints requesting a pseudonym, or those complaints accompanied by motions for TROs. These types of documents must be filed in person at the Clerk's Office.
- DO NOT file Miscellaneous cases electronically. Bring them to the Clerk's Office.
- DO NOT open a second case if you make a mistake. Call the Clerk's Office.
- DO NOT file the complaint twice if you've made an error. Call the Clerk's Office.
- DO NOT add the address of any party to the docket. Addresses should appear on the complaint only.
- DO NOT include "THE," "AN" or "A" as the first word of any party name.

FOR MORE HELP:

- Visit our website for tutorials, manuals, and step-by-step instructions:
<http://www.dcd.uscourts.gov/attorney-civil-case-opening-information>
- Call the Clerk's Office for guidance:
New Case Desk/Intake: (202) 354-3120
Civil Help Desk: (202) 354-3190