

# OPENING A CIVIL CASE WITH A MOTION TO FILE COMPLAINT UNDER SEAL

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## Introduction

Attorneys may electronically file civil cases that are accompanied by a Motion for Leave to File Complaint Under Seal.

If a mistake is made during case opening, the filer must proceed to docket the complaint and Motion for Leave to File Complaint Under Seal to maintain and preserve the file date. If you realize you have made an error, please call the Clerk's Office helpline regarding the errors at (202) 354-3120.

For civil case opening information, to include entering party names and docketing complaints, please refer to instructions on **Attorney Civil Case Opening Information:**

<https://www.dcd.uscourts.gov/attorney-civil-case-opening-information>

## Procedure

1. Open the case using linked instructions for civil case opening above.
2. Docket the Complaint as the first docket entry (with attachments, as needed).
3. Docket the Sealed Motion for Leave to File Complaint Under Seal as the second docket entry (with attachments, as needed).
4. Docket any other case opening documents, as needed.

## Docketing the Motion for Leave to File Complaint Under Seal

1. Select **CIVIL** from the menu bar
2. Select **Sealed Entries for Partially Sealed Cases** under **Partially Sealed Cases**
3. Select **Sealed Motion for Leave to File Complaint Under Seal** and **[SUBMIT]**
4. If your case number does not populate automatically, enter your cv case number and **[SUBMIT]**
5. The caption will display for you to verify. Do not click on the caption, just **[SUBMIT]** if it is the correct case.
6. The following note will display; **[SUBMIT]**

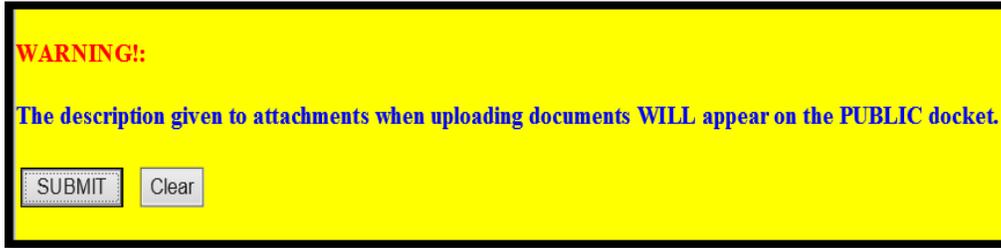
**NOTE:**

**OPPOSING COUNSEL WILL NOT HAVE ACCESS TO THIS DOCUMENT through the system-generated Notice of Electronic Filing. You must serve it upon them by other means if necessary.**

SUBMIT

Clear

7. The following warning will display; **[SUBMIT]**



8. On the right side of the screen, you are directed to select the filer. Highlight the party and click **[NEXT]**. Note: If for some reason you left off a plaintiff when opening the case, you can select **[NEW FILER]** to add the party and click **[NEXT]**
9. The screen will turn red indicating that you are using an event that seals the attachments. Upload your **motion** in the *Main Document* field by selecting **[CHOOSE FILE]**. (*Right click on the PDF and open it to ensure it is the correct document before attaching.*) Under the Attachments field, you will attach an unredacted complaint and your proposed order. You must label each attachment using the *Category* field or by typing a description in the *Description* field as shown below; **[SUBMIT]**

**NOTE: PLEASE BE AWARE THAT DESCRIPTIONS ARE VIEWABLE ON THE PUBLIC DOCKET, AND THE MOTION ITSELF (NOT THE ATTACHMENTS) WILL BE MADE PUBLIC BY THE CLERK'S OFFICE.**

Date document filed (mandatory)  
5/10/2022

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Select the PDF document and any attachments.

**Main Document**  
 test application.pdf

Attachments	Category	Description
1. <input type="button" value="Choose File"/> test application.pdf	Exhibit	<input type="text"/>
2. <input type="button" value="Choose File"/> test proposed order.pdf	Text of Proposed Order	<input type="text"/>

10. The caption will display for you to verify. Do not click on the caption, just **[SUBMIT]** if it is the correct case.
11. Review the final text and if okay, **[SUBMIT]**. If you have changes to make, you may back up and do so, then **[SUBMIT]**.
12. You will see the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) and your document number which indicates your Motion has been filed.
13. Print the NEF and serve it and the sealed documents on opposing counsel.

Your motion will be forwarded to the judge for review.