UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY

ATTORNEY CASE OPENING

A GUIDE FOR REGISTERED ELECTRONIC FILERS TO OPEN A CIVIL ACTION IN THE U.S. DISTRICT COURT'S ELECTRONIC FILING SYSTEM

(Effective December 2023)

Table of Contents:

Attorney Case Opening Guide

The Attorney Case Opening Guide presents the step-by-step method for opening a civil case in CM/ECF using event code: "Open a Civil Case (Attorney)".

The following initiating documents may be filed using the Open a Civil Case (Attorney) Event Code:

- Complaint
- Notice of Removal
- Petition to Confirm Arbitration Award
- Petition to Quash/Compel/Enforce Subpoenas
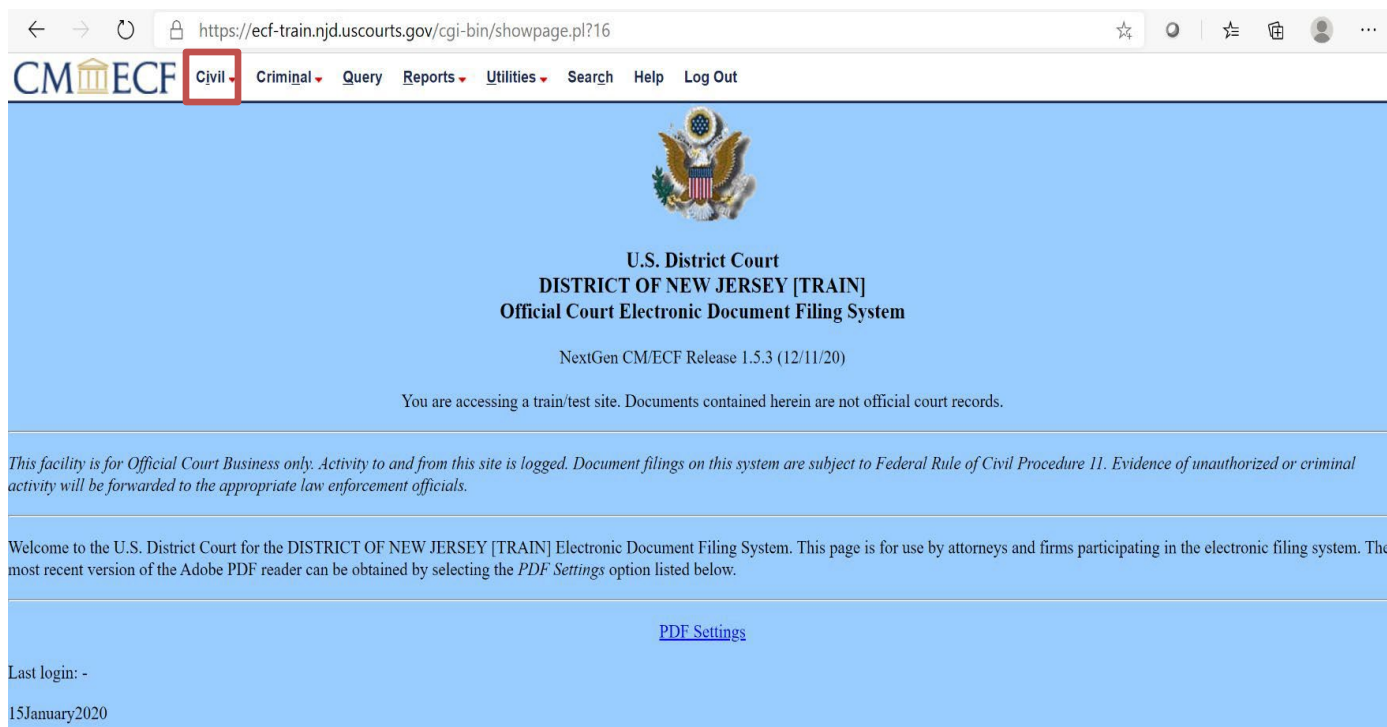- Petition for a Writ of Habeas Corpus

NOTE: Before starting have at hand, in PDF format, the initiating document, all attachments, and a Civil Cover Sheet (JS-44 form). A credit card will be needed to pay the filing fee.

………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Step 1.   ECF Menu

On the *blue* menu bar select **Civil**.

Figure #1:

Step. 2.   Civil Events Menu

Under the Civil Menu select the event **Open a Civil Case (Attorney)**

Figure #2:

CM⛪ECF C_ivil ▾ Crimi_nal ▾ Query Reports ▾ Utilities ▾

Civil Events

Open a Case
Open a Civil Case (Attorney)

Initial Pleadings and Service
Initial Pleadings for Attorneys (33-1, 33-2606)
Complaints and Other Initiating Documents
Service of Process
Answers to Complaints/Initiating Documents
Other Answers

Motions and Related Filings
Motions
Responses and Replies

Other Filings
ADR Documents
Discovery Documents
Notices
Trial Documents
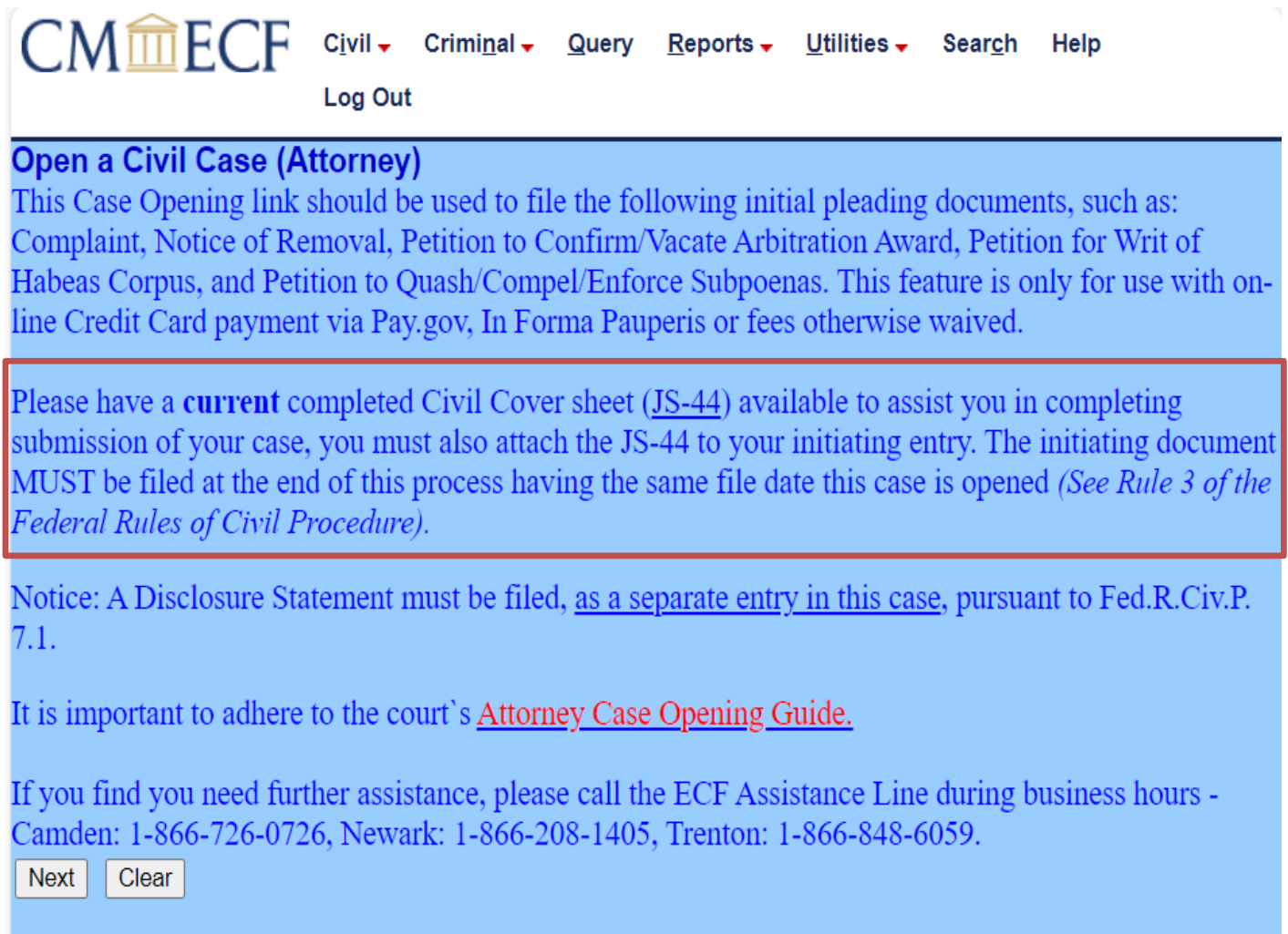Appeal Documents
Other Documents

Step 3.   <u>Initiating Documents</u>

Sealed complaints or a complaint including any sealed documents must be filed in the traditional manner by submission of the complaint in paper form with a copy of all documents, in PDF format on a Flash Drive, to the Clerk's Office. Sealed Complaints may also be submitted via email, in PDF format at ecfhelp@njd.uscourts.gov.

-        The Civil Cover Sheet (form JS-44) is available on the [Court's website](#) under Forms → Civil;

-        Click (NEXT)

Figure #3:

CM/ECF   Civil ▾   Criminal ▾   Query   Reports ▾   Utilities ▾   Search   Help

Log Out

Open a Civil Case (Attorney)
This Case Opening link should be used to file the following initial pleading documents, such as: Complaint, Notice of Removal, Petition to Confirm/Vacate Arbitration Award, Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus, and Petition to Quash/Compel/Enforce Subpoenas. This feature is only for use with on-line Credit Card payment via Pay.gov, In Forma Pauperis or fees otherwise waived.

Please have a **current** completed Civil Cover sheet (JS-44) available to assist you in completing submission of your case, you must also attach the JS-44 to your initiating entry. The initiating document MUST be filed at the end of this process having the same file date this case is opened *(See Rule 3 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure).*

Notice: A Disclosure Statement must be filed, as a separate entry in this case, pursuant to Fed.R.Civ.P. 7.1.

It is important to adhere to the court`s Attorney Case Opening Guide.

If you find you need further assistance, please call the ECF Assistance Line during business hours - Camden: 1-866-726-0726, Newark: 1-866-208-1405, Trenton: 1-866-848-6059.

[Next] [Clear]

Step 4.   Allocation

When selecting "Office*" on the following screen, be guided by Local Civil Rule 40.1, Allocation and Assignment of Cases.

NOTE: The Clerk will make the *final determination* of case allocation.

-          Click (**NEXT**)

Figure #4:

CM▥ECF   Ci̲vil ▾   Crimi̲nal ▾   Query   Re̲ports ▾   Utilities ▾   Search   Help   Log Out

Open a Civil Case (Attorney)

Please note the OFFICE of the appropriate county for selection on the next screen:

CAMDEN = Atlantic, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Salem, Burlington

NEWARK = Bergen, Essex, Hudson, (North) Middlesex, Morris, Passaic, Sussex, Union

TRENTON = Hunterdon, (South) Middlesex, Mercer, Monmouth, Ocean, Somerset, Warren

[Next]   [Clear]

*Vicinage Footnotes:

Middlesex County is divided between the Newark and Trenton Vicinages as follows:

NEWARK: Northern Middlesex County - (*north* of the Raritan River)
TRENTON: Southern Middlesex County - (*south* of the Raritan River**)**

Step 5.   Office/Lead Case/Associated Case/Related Case Fields

      i.   Select the appropriate Office (Vicinage: Camden, Newark, or Trenton);

      ii.   Select the "Civil" case type *only* (other case types may not be filed using this event code but must be filed by the traditional method);

      iii.   Enter data in the Other Court Name field, and Other Court Number field *only* if you are filing a **Notice of Removal** (e.g., "Superior Court of _ _ _ County". Enter the Superior Court case number in the *Other Court Number* field; **Note**: DO NOT USE A DASH, use a blank space instead).

      -     Click (**NEXT**)

Figure #5:

Step 5(A):   <u>**For Notices of Removal** *only*</u>

If you are filing a Complaint, <u>skip to step #6</u>, Step # 5(A) applies *only* to <u>Notices of Removal</u>.

- Enter "Superior Court of (<u>name</u>) County" in the *Name of Other* Court field.
- Enter the Superior Court case number in the *Case Number in Other Court* field.

- Click **(NEXT)**

Figure #5(A):

Enter the Superior Court Name

Other court name: SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY, MIDDLESEX COUNTY
Other court number: MID L 24 100
JPML number:
Next | Clear

Enter the case information as seen here. Do not add dashes.

Step 5(B):   <u>**For Multi-District Litigations** *only*</u>

- Enter the four-digit Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation Number in the JPML
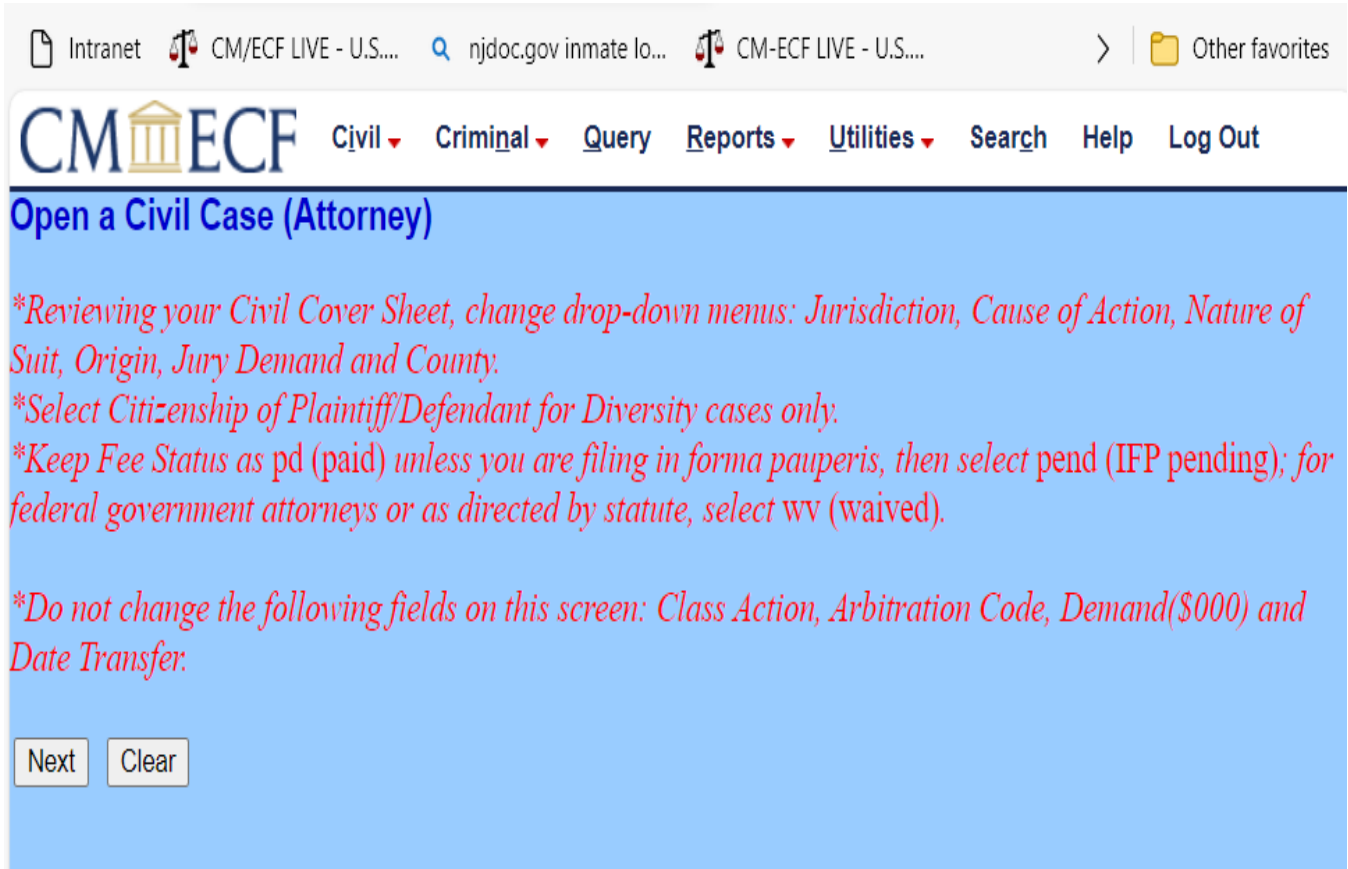
- Click **(NEXT)**

Figure #5(B):

JPML number: 2738
Next | Clear

Enter the JPML Number

Step 6.   <u>Instructions to Complete JS-44 Information (Next Screen)</u>

Review the screen instructions;

- click (**NEXT**)

Figure #6:

Step 7.   Civil Cover Sheet (JS-44) Information

Figure #7:

NOTE: Make no entry in the **Filter** boxes.

  i.   Jurisdiction: as appropriate
  ii.   Cause of Action: the list is limited; please select the title/section most closely
          related.
  iii.   Nature of Suit: select the Nature of Suit most closely related.
  iv.   Origin: for Complaint, select 1; for Notice of Removal, select 2.
  v.   Citizenship of Plaintiff/Defendant: *reserved for diversity jurisdiction* cases; make
          no entry otherwise.
  vi.   Jury demand: select as appropriate.
  vii.   Class action: make **no entry** in this field (leave as "n").
  viii.   Demand: make **no entry** in this field.
  ix.   Arbitration Code: make **no entry** in this field.
  x.   County: the list defaults to Atlantic County; please select as appropriate from drop
          down list.
  xi.   Fee status: indicate paid or otherwise, as appropriate (pay the Filing/Administrative
          fee through Pay.gov at the conclusion of the filing process).
  xii.   Fee date: automatic entry; do not change the date.
  xiii.   Date transfer: make **no entry** in this field.

  -       Click **(NEXT)**

Step 8.   Advisory: Use Upper Case, Do Not Add Party Address, Etc…

Review the screen instructions;

NOTE: Parties will appear on the docket in the order in which they are entered.

-    click (**NEXT**)

Figure #8:

Step 9.   Add Parties (See **Guide to Searching and Entering Parties** for detailed instructions.)

SEARCHING FOR A PARTY:

You must SEARCH for a party PRIOR to adding a new party (Figure #8-1).

Enter the party name in the appropriate fields as follows, and then click the (**SEARCH**) button.

COMPLAINTS:

To add a party from a Complaint, search the database by entering in **UPPER CASE** the party's last name/business name as listed on the Complaint.

NOTICES OF REMOVAL:

To add a party from a Notice of Removal, search the database by entering in **UPPER CASE** the party's last name/business name as listed in the State Court Complaint.

-     Enter the names of the parties from the most recently filed <u>State Court Complaint</u> (e.g., the last Amended Complaint), and attach that Complaint as an exhibit to the Notice of Removal.
-     Enter Third Party Defendants if a Third Party Complaint is filed and attach the Third Party Complaint as an exhibit to the Notice of Removal. Narrow your search by entering **a last/business name** *and* **a first name** if applicable.

Figure #9-1

Step 9(A)   Select Parties

If the search results list the correct party, highlight the party, and click (**SELECT PARTY**) (Figure #8(A)1). Proceed to **Step 9(B)**;

OR:

If the party is NOT LISTED (Figure #9(A)2) in the search results, proceed to **Step 9(C)** for instructions on how to create a new party.
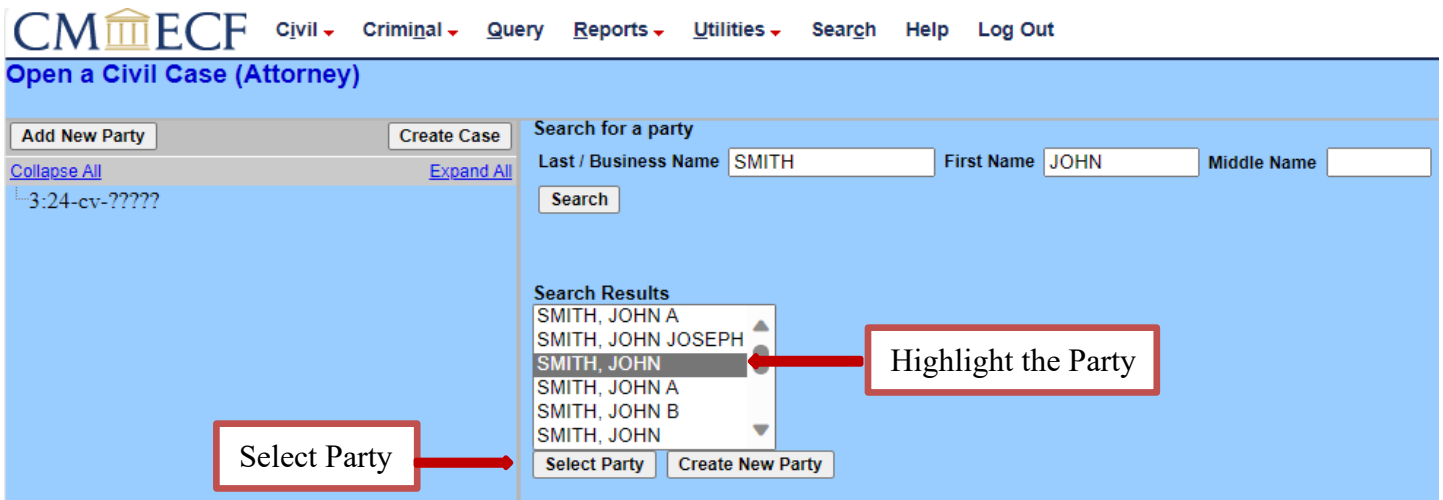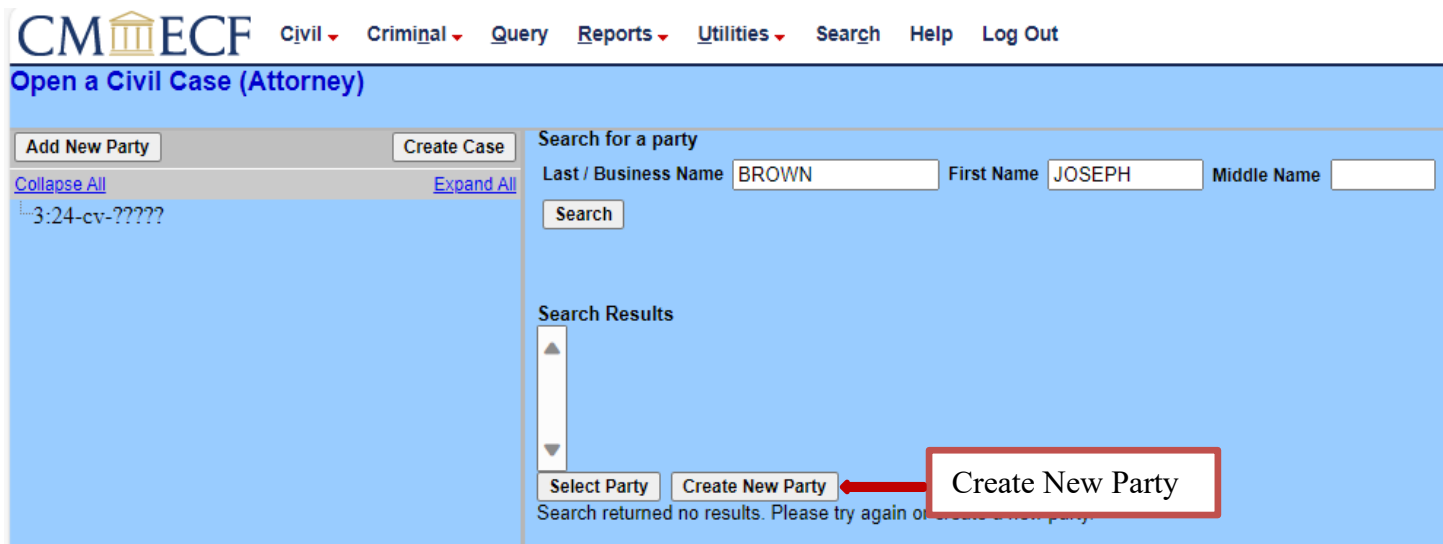
Figure #9(A)1:

Figure #9(A)2:

Step 9(B).   Party Information (adding party found in database)

-        If the information displayed on the Party Information screen does not match the party in the initiating document (e.g., incorrect middle name/initial), click the (Start a New Search) hyperlink located below the (**ADD PARTY**) button (Figure #9(B)) to cancel the selection and return to the Search for a Party screen;

-        If the correct party *is* displayed, make an appropriate selection from the party **Role** field drop-down list and, if necessary, enter data in the **Party Text** field (e.g., Executor of xyz, Commissioner of abc, "in her capacity as 123", etc...).

        DO NOT change the Start Date, Corporation, or Notice fields.

        ALL other information should be left blank.

-        Click the (**ADD PARTY**) button to add the displayed party to the case. The Search for a Party screen will again display (Step 9(A)) to enable the entry of additional parties.

-        Continue adding *all parties* as listed in the initiating document. Once all parties have been entered proceed to **Step 9(E)** to Create the Case.

Figure #9(B):

Step 9(C). Create New Party

Select (**CREATE NEW PARTY**) (Figure #9(C)1); the Party Information screen will display (Figure #9(C)2). Proceed to Step 9(D) for instructions on how to enter information into the Party Information screen.

Figure #9(C)1:

Figure #9(C)2:

Step 9(D)-1.   Party Information (creating new party)

- Enter information for the Middle Name, Generation (e.g., Jr., Sr.) and Title fields, if necessary.
- Select the correct party "Role" from the drop-down list (e.g., Plaintiff, Defendant).
- Enter data as appropriate into the **Party Text** field (e.g., Executrix of xyz, Commissioner of abc, "in her capacity as 123", etc...).
- **DO NOT** alter the Start Date, Corporation, or Notice fields.

  All other information should be left blank.

- Click the **(ADD PARTY)** button to add the displayed party to the case. The Search for a Party screen will again display (Step 8(A)) to enable the entry of any additional parties.
- Continue adding *all parties* as listed in the initiating document.
- Once all parties have been entered proceed to **Step 9(E)** to Create the Case.
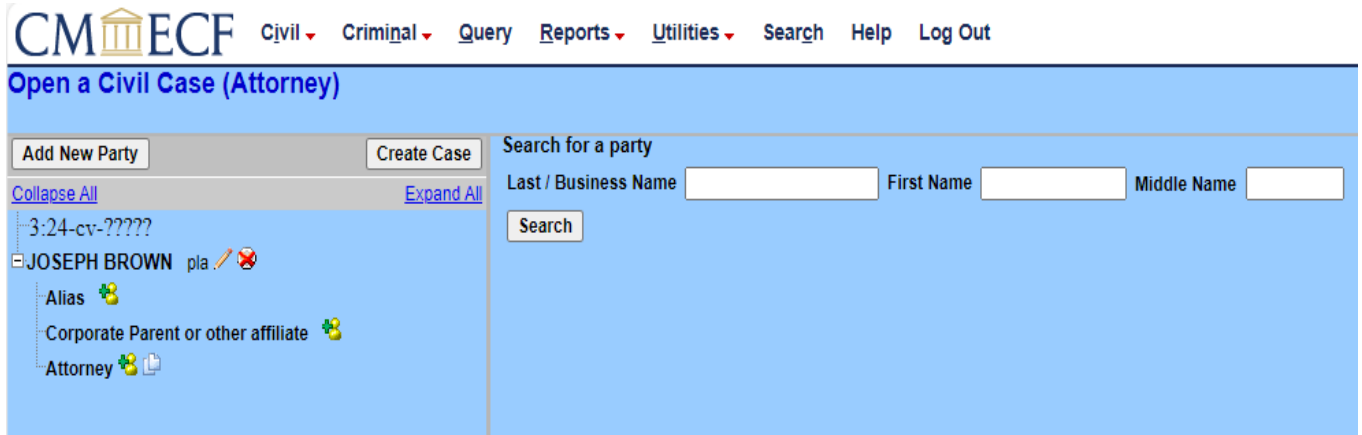
Figure #9(D)1:

Step 9(D)-2.   <u>Alias</u>

Click the green/yellow icon next to the word Alias on the left side of the screen to add an alias.

Figure #9(D)2:

Note: <u>Corporate Parent</u>

Do not add a Corporate Parent at this time; this will be done at the time of the filing of the Corporate Disclosure Statement (at the conclusion of this procedure).

Note: <u>Attorney</u>

Do not add an Attorney at this time; this will be done at the time of the Attorney/Party Association (later in this procedure).

Step 9(E).   Create Case:

　　　　After all parties are added, click on the **(CREATE CASE)** button (Figure #9E1).
The system will prompt "Case will be created. Proceed?" (Figure #9E2).
If the case information is correct, click "Yes"; otherwise, click "No" and finish
adding parties.
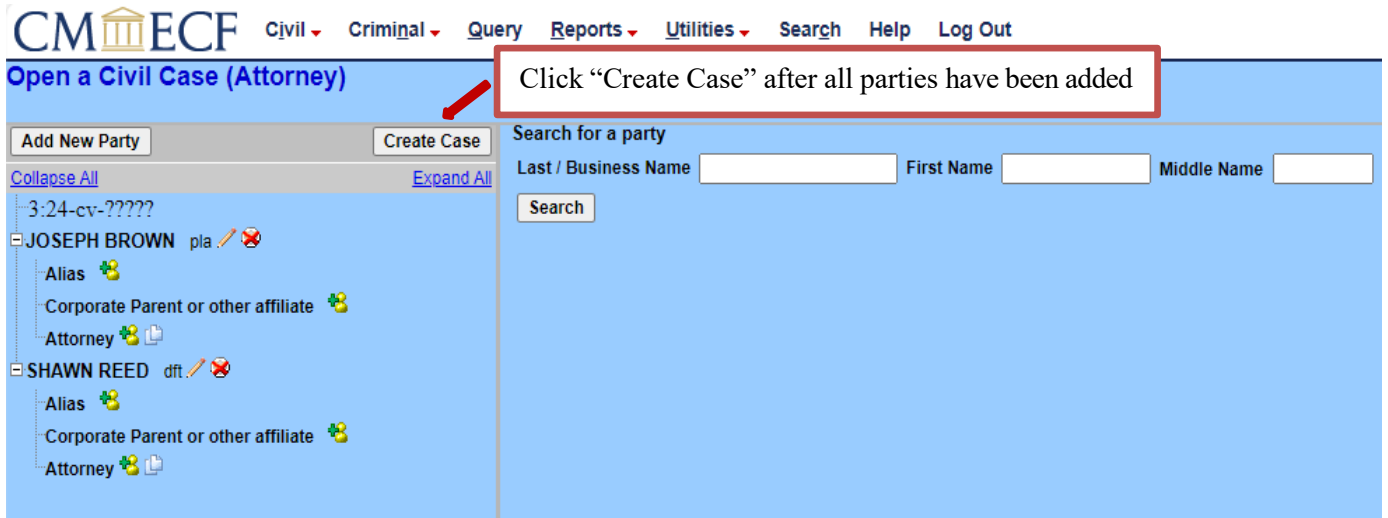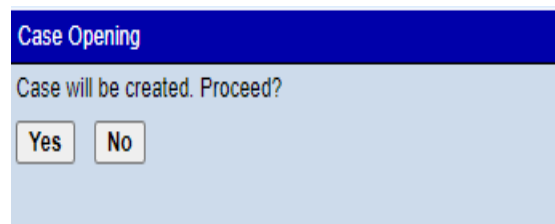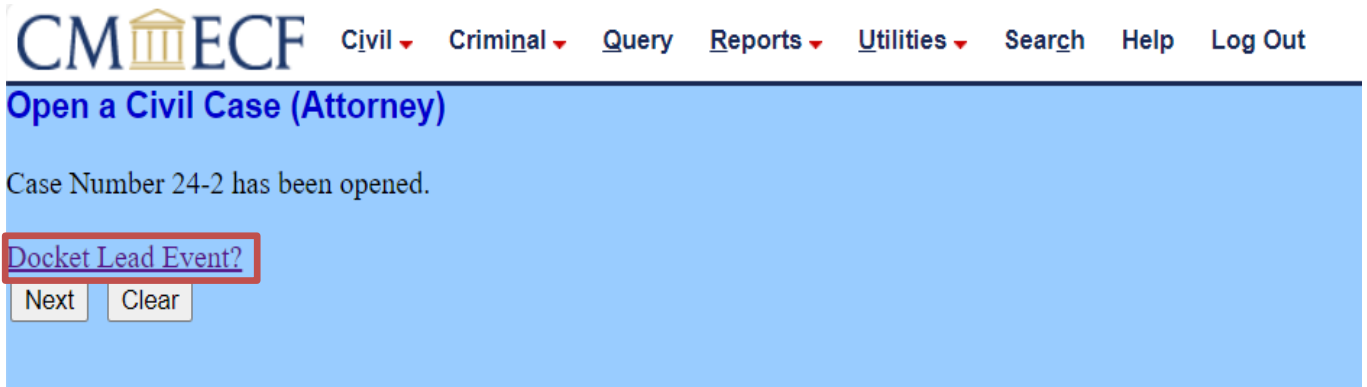
Figure #9E1:

Figure #9E2:

Step 10.   Docket the Lead Event

Note that a case number is automatically assigned and displayed on the screen. Please make a written note of the case number; it may be needed if technical problems occur.
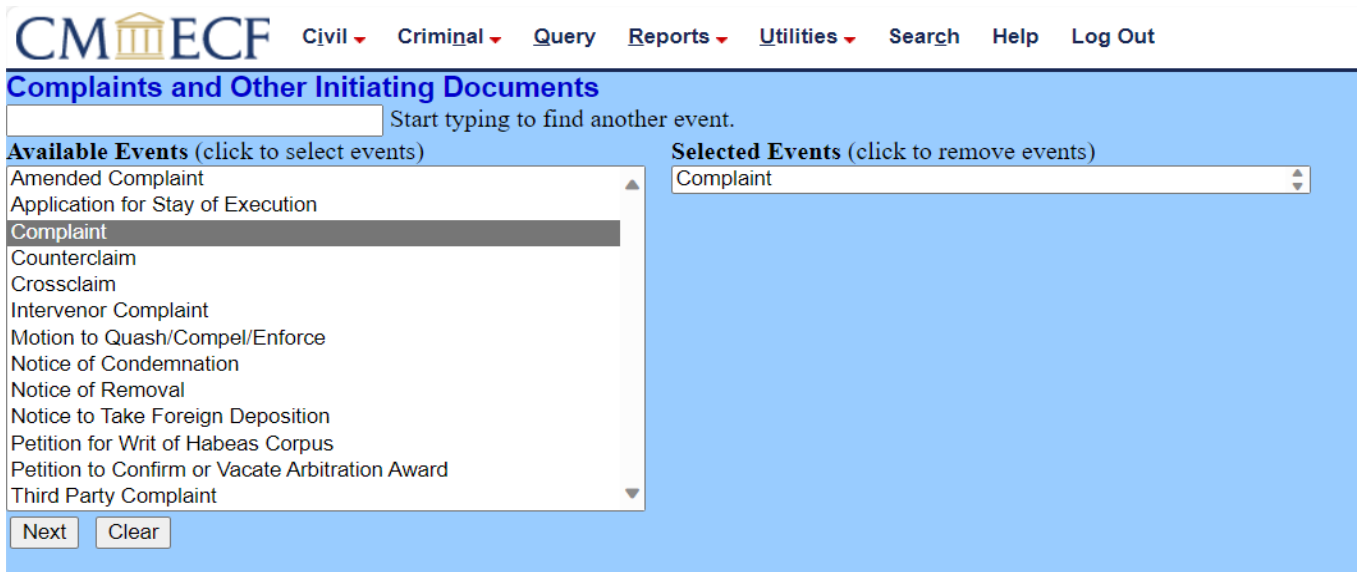
-        Click **(NEXT)***

Figure #10:

* The initiating document (e.g., a Complaint) pertaining to any given civil action *must* be filed on the same date as that date upon which the civil action has been opened (See: Rule 3. Commencing an Action | Federal Rules of Civil Procedure | US Law | LII / Legal Information Institute (cornell.edu)). If a technical problem (e.g., a failed browser) prohibits the uploading of an initiating document during the Attorney Case Opening Procedure, knowledge of the case number (assigned in Step 9 above) will enable the filer to docket the initiating document as a separate event immediately afterward; for this reason, the filer should note the case number.

Step 11.   Select an Initiating Document Type

- Select the document type from the menu (e.g., for a Complaint, select Complaint; for a Notice of Removal, select Notice of Removal).
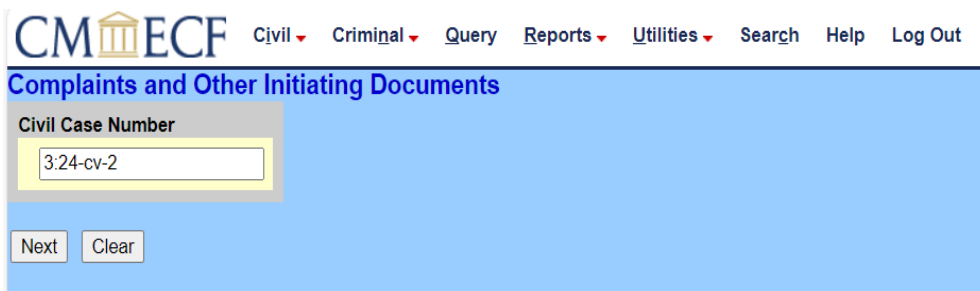
- Click (**NEXT**)

Figure #11:

Step 12.   Case Number Displayed

The case number is displayed on the screen.

DO NOT CHANGE THIS NUMBER!!

- Click (**NEXT**)

Figure #12:

Step 13.   Case Caption and Case Number Displayed

The case caption and case number are displayed.

-    Click (**NEXT**)

Figure #13:

Step 14.   Select Filer

Select the party/parties filing the initiating document (i.e., for a Complaint, select the Plaintiff(s); for a Notice of Removal select the Defendant(s)). To select multiple parties, hold down the CTRL button and select the applicable parties.

-    Click (**NEXT**)

Figure #14:

Step 14(A).   <u>Attorney-Party Association</u>

Check the box on the left of the screen to create the association.

- Check the "Lead" box if appropriate.

- Click (**NEXT**)

Figure #14(A):

CM ECF   C̲ivil ▾   Crimi̲nal ▾   Query   Reports ▾   Utilities ▾   Search   Help   Log Out

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents
3:24-cv-00002 BROWN v. REED

NEW PARTY NAMES need to be added on the next screen first by clicking the *New Party* button, then appropriate parties already on the case should be selected (**Do Not Use All Party/Defendants/Plaintiffs radio button**), before clicking the *Next* button. Do not fill in party address info.

The following attorney/party associations do not exist for the abovecase(s).

Please check the box on the left of the screen forassociations which should be created.

If the association shouldnot be created, be sure the box is *unchecked*.

☑ JOSEPH BROWN (pty:pla) represented by AttorneyOne Njd (aty) ☑ Lead ☑ Notice

[Next]   [Clear]
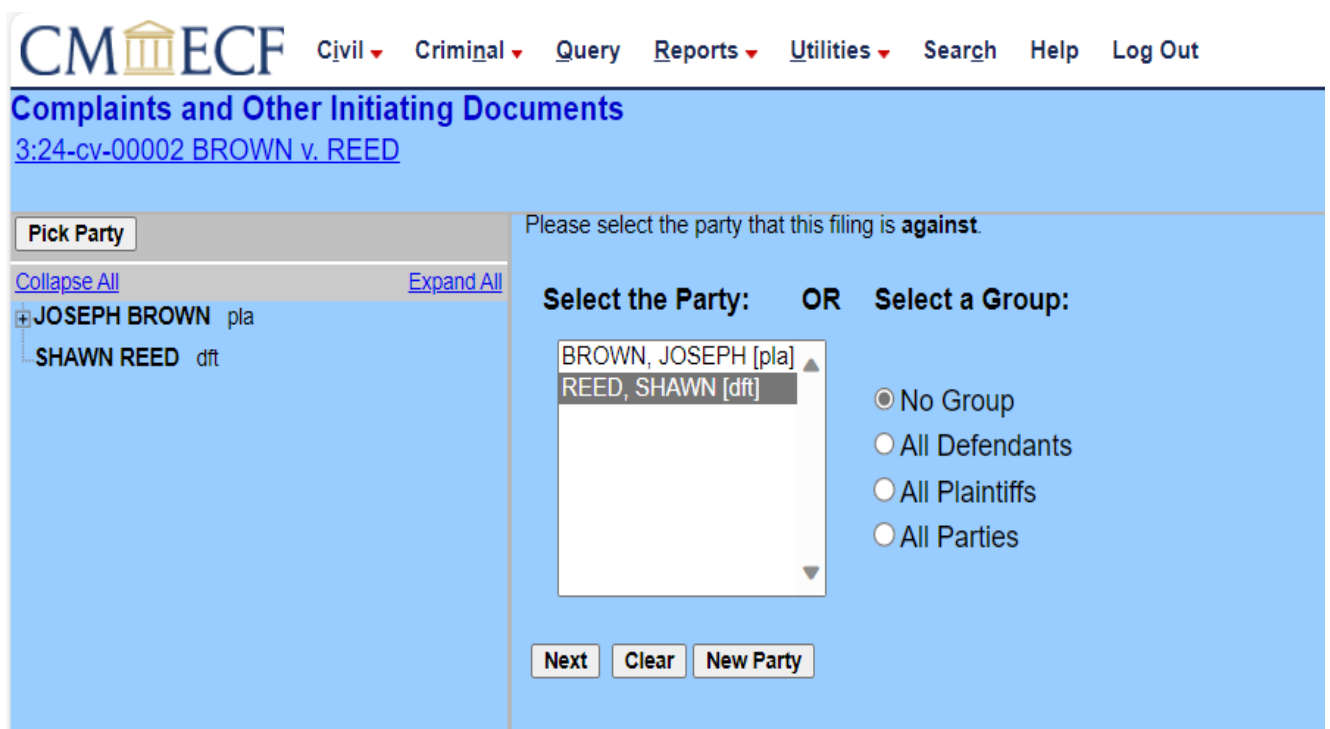
Step 15.   Filed Against

Complaint:

Select the party/parties against which the initiating document is filed.
DO NOT select the **All Defendants** radio button; Select each defendant individually.
Select multiple parties by holding down the CTRL button on your keyboard and selecting the applicable parties.

-        Click (**NEXT)**

Figure #15:

Step 16.　　　Upload the Initiating Document

- Upload the initiating document, and any attachments (e.g., Civil Cover Sheet, IFP Application, etc...).
  NOTE: Populate at least one and sometimes both the Category and Description fields to describe any attachments.
- **Do not** upload the Corporate Disclosure Statement or any motions during this transaction. Please file them separately using an applicable event code (refer to Step #25 for a list of related events).
- Step # 15(A) applies only to Notices of Removal.
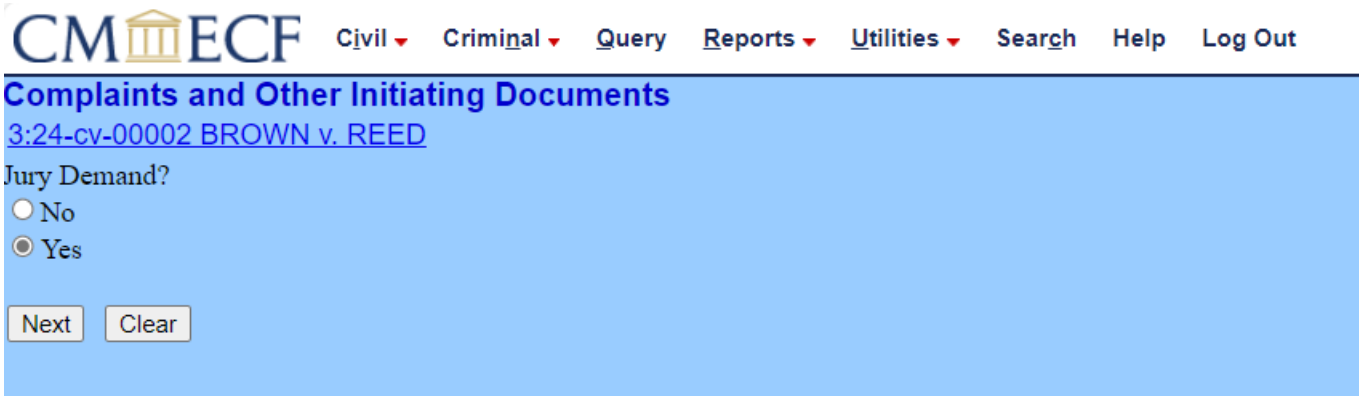
- Click (**NEXT**)

Figure #16:

NOTE:　For Notices of Removal, the State Court Complaint and any Amended Complaints or Answers must be an attachment to the Notice of Removal.

Step 17.   Jury Demand

Indicate if there is a Jury Demand.

-    Click (**NEXT**)

Figure #17:

CM▥ECF   Ci̲vil ▾   Crimi̲nal ▾   Query   Reports ▾   Utilities ▾   Search   Help   Log Out

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

3:24-cv-00002 BROWN v. REED
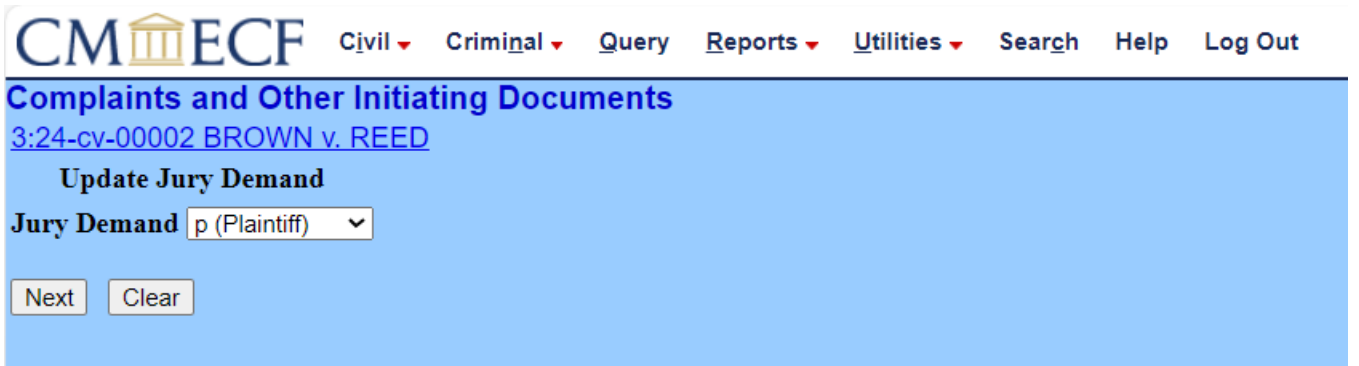
Jury Demand?

○ No

◉ Yes

[Next]   [Clear]

Step 18.   Jury Demand Text

-    Indicate which party/parties have made a "Jury Demand".

-    Click (**NEXT**)

Figure #18:

CM▥ECF   Ci̲vil ▾   Crimi̲nal ▾   Query   Reports ▾   Utilities ▾   Search   Help   Log Out

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

3:24-cv-00002 BROWN v. REED

Update Jury Demand

Jury Demand [p (Plaintiff)   ▾]

[Next]   [Clear]

Step 19.   Select Payment Type

Follow the on-screen instructions for payment of the filing fee.

-        If an application to proceed *In Forma Pauperis* is filed, or the fees
         are waived, select the applicable radio button, and skip to Step 23;
         otherwise select **Credit Card**.

-        Click (**NEXT**)

Figure #19

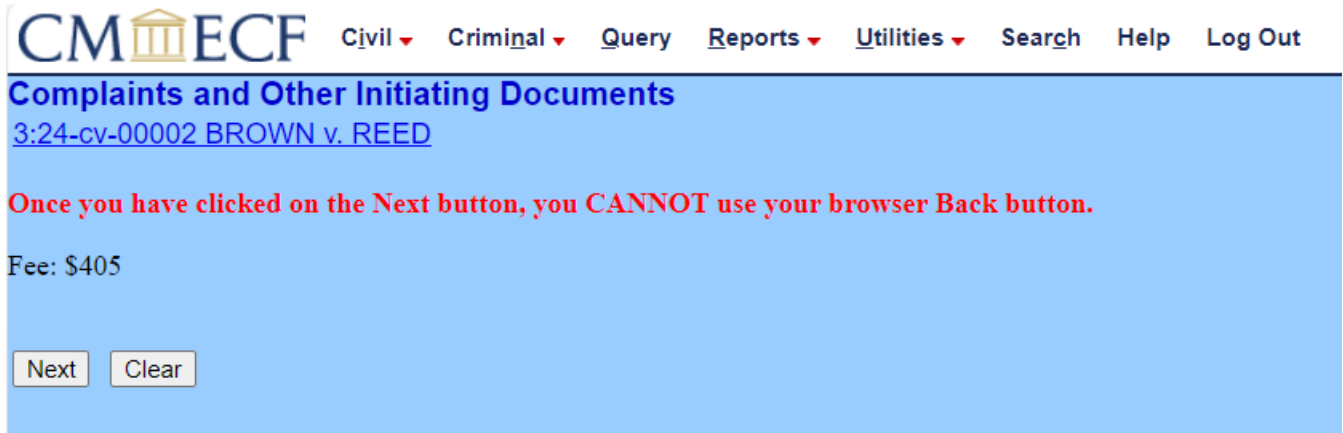**Step 20**.   Fee Notice

Please review the screen and commit the transaction.

-     You will be directed to Pay.gov to enter payment information.

-     Click (**NEXT**)

Figure #20

Effective May 1, 2013, pursuant to Judicial Conference Policy, all federal courts began charging a new $55 administrative fee for filing a Civil Action, Suit or Proceeding in a District Court, in addition to the $350 filing fee for a total of $405. This new fee appears as item 1 on the District Court Miscellaneous Fee Schedule which is issued in accordance with 28 U.S.C.§1914.

This new administrative fee does not apply to persons granted *in forma pauperis* status under 28 U.S.C. § 1915.

Step 21.   <u>Pay.gov Debit/Credit Card Payment</u>

Enter your payment data as indicated on the Manage My Account screen.

-          Select payment type: click (**CONTINUE WITH ACH**) (Figure #21) or
 (**PLASTIC CARD PAYMENT**) (Figure #21(A))

Figure #21

Figure #21(A)

Court Specific

Person Completing Transaction *	test attorney
Attorney Name *	Test Attorney
Attorney Email *	attytrain1@gmail.com
Attorney Phone Number *	609-222-2222

Email Receipt

Email	njdpacer+attytrain1@gmail.com
Confirm Email	njdpacer+attytrain1@gmail.com
Additional Email Addresses	

Authorization

☐ I authorize a charge to my credit card for the amount above in accordance with my card issuer agreement. *

Note: We protect the security of your information during transmission using Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) software, which encrypts information you submit.

Submit   Back   Cancel

Step 22.   Authorize Payment

Authorize the payment by checking the appropriate box.

-        Click (**SUBMIT**).

Figure #22:

Step 23. <u>Complaints and Other Initiating Documents Screen with Warning</u>

Review screen.

- Click (**NEXT**)

Figure #23:
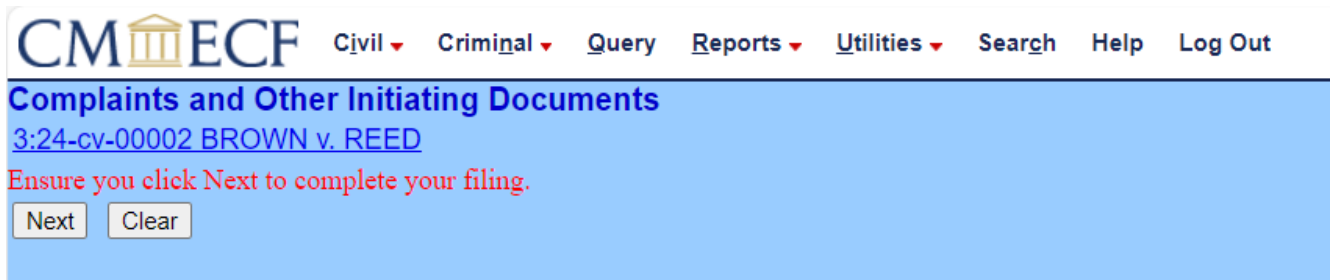
Step 24. <u>Complaints and Other Initiating Documents Screen</u>

Review screen.

- Click (**NEXT**)

Figure #24:

Step 25.   Final Docket Text Review

Figure #25 presents the final docket text for the initiating document.

Clicking the (**NEXT**) button will commit the transaction.

-    Click (**NEXT**)

Figure #25

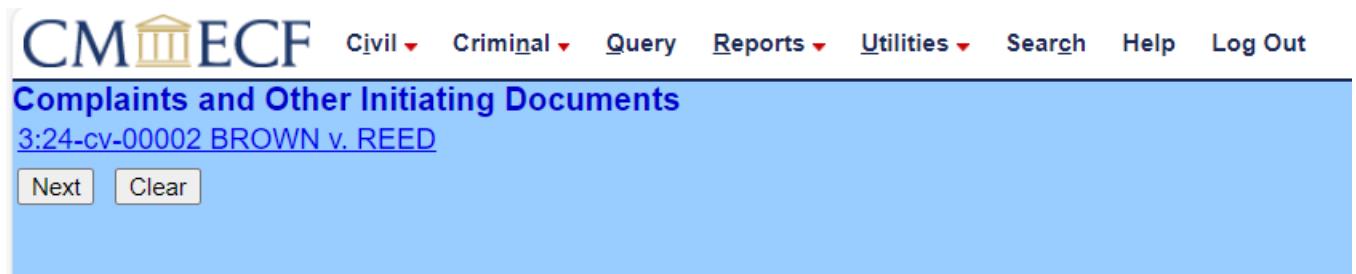CM☐ECF   Ci̲vil ▾   Cri̲minal ▾   Q̲uery   Reports ▾   Utilities ▾   Search   Help   Log Out

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents
3:24-cv-00002 BROWN v. REED

Docket Text: Final Text

COMPLAINT against SHAWN REED (Filing and Admin fee $ 405 receipt number ANJTDC-52488.) JURY DEMAND., filed by JOSEPH BROWN. (Attachments: # (1) Civil Cover Sheet) (Njd, AttorneyOne)

ATTENTION!! Pressing the NEXT button on this screen commits this transaction. You will have no further opportunity to modify this transaction if you continue.
Have you redacted?

Source Document Path (for confirmation only):
C:\fakepath\Complaint for test case.pdf   pages: 1
C:\fakepath\Civil Cover Sheet 1.pdf   pages: 1

Next   Clear

Step 26.   Notice of Electronic Filing

The Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) is the record of the completed transaction.

Figure #26

CM🏛ECF C̲ivil ▾   Crimi̲nal ▾   Query   Reports ▾   Utilities ▾   Search   Help   Log Out

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents
3:24-cv-00002 BROWN v. REED

U.S. District Court

DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY [TRAIN]

Notice of Electronic Filing

The following transaction was entered by Njd, AttorneyOne on 1/19/2024 at 11:00 AM EST and filed on 1/19/2024
Case Name: BROWN v. REED
Case Number: 3:24-cv-00002
Filer: JOSEPH BROWN
Document Number: 1

Docket Text:
COMPLAINT against SHAWN REED (Filing and Admin fee $ 405 receipt number ANJTDC-52488.) JURY DEMAND., filed by JOSEPH BROWN. (Attachments: # (1) Civil Cover Sheet)(Njd, AttorneyOne)

3:24-cv-00002 Notice has been electronically mailed to:

AttorneyOne Njd   njdpacer+attytrain1@gmail.com

3:24-cv-00002 Notice has been sent by regular U.S. Mail:

The following document(s) are associated with this transaction:

Document description: Main Document
Original filename:n/a
Electronic document Stamp:
[STAMP dcecfStamp_ID=1046708974 [Date=1/19/2024] [FileNumber=46856-0]
[706d5789f953f18a81c4ce115407b4bcdfb7f1d09394ac21505dd86e5b9e19687be85
e0a3106e66e24378c72098727780e45159ea184736bb3fd233ef22c3589]]
Document description: Civil Cover Sheet
Original filename:n/a
Electronic document Stamp:
[STAMP dcecfStamp_ID=1046708974 [Date=1/19/2024] [FileNumber=46856-1]
[173761bf070257bffb1d26846118b84922077f060afeca8c88e8a5124dcdc6a56593c
853a4cf2ac0e6136c4b2513d28f0ea2d203b03aeda030071b708b407440]]

NOTE: If an error occurred during the Open a Civil Case (Attorney) Procedure which prevented the uploading of the initiating document, it may now be filed as a separate event (Civil Events Menu>Initial Pleadings & Service>Complaints and Other Initiating Documents); see Step #27.

Step 27.　　　File Related Documents (as separate events in CM/ECF)

If appropriate, file documents related to the initiating document.

Figure #27:

CIVIL EVENT	**MENU ADDRESS**
Corporate Disclosure Statement	Civil Events➡Other Filings➡Other Documents➡Corporate Disclosure Statement
Motion	Civil Events➡Motions and Related Filings➡ Motions➡(select appropriate event)
Application to Extend Time to Answer	Civil Events➡Other Filings➡Other Documents➡Application to Extend Time to Answer

Step 28.　　　Review and Assignment of a Judge:

The case will be reviewed for accuracy and an NEF sent indicating the assigned judge within approximately two business days.

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

Congratulations! You have opened a case in the United States District Court using the Attorney Case Opening Procedure. The Court will be automatically notified of your filing. Your filing will be reviewed for accuracy and you will be notified if additional action is required.

Step 29.   Alternate Method of Filing; Technical Failure

If a technical failure occurred, preventing the filer from uploading an initiating document (e.g, Complaint), the initiating document may now be filed. Please note however, as indicated previously in this procedure, the initiating document must be filed on the same date that the case is opened (See Rule 3 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure).
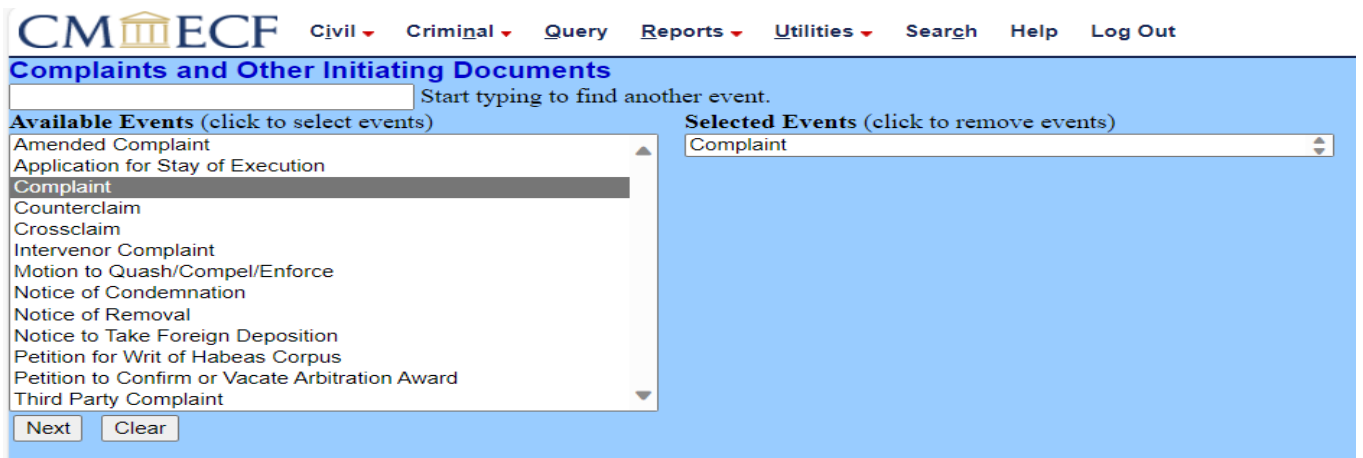
i.   Go to: CM/ECF>Civil Events Menu>Initial Pleadings and Service;

-     Click (**Complaints and Other Initiating Documents**)

Figure #29-1

ii.   Select the correct type of initiating document (e.g., Complaint)

-     Click (**NEXT**)

Figure 29-2

iii.   Enter the case number (Figure 29-3-1) assigned in Attorney Case Opening Procedure-Step 9;

NOTE: If the filer does not know the case number, contact the CM/ECF help desk during regular business hours for instructions on how to complete the filing.

Figure 29-3-1

-    Click (**FIND THIS CASE**) (Figure 29-3-2);

Figure 29-3-2

-    Click (**NEXT) (**Figure 29-3-3**);**

Figure 29-3-3

iv.   Begin at Step #12 of the Attorney Case Opening Procedure to complete the filing process;

-    File related documents as indicated in Attorney Case Opening Procedure Step #27.