



UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY

ELECTRONIC CASE FILING (ECF) SYSTEM  
PDF/A

This is a notice of a prospective change to the technical filing standard associated with our Case Management / Electronic Case Files (CM/ECF) system. Since its inception, the system has required that electronic documents be filed in portable document format (PDF). Now, a move to the new more-controlled PDF/A standard is necessary to enhance CM/ECF security and to improve the archiving and preservation of case-related documents.

Security concerns, and concerns about ensuring that our electronic documents could be archived and retrieved for decades to come, led us to join with other government agencies, corporations and technologists around the world to develop a new international electronic document standard that addresses those concerns. That new standard, adopted by the International Organization for Standardization in 2005, is PDF/A.

The Courts have delayed implementation of the PDF/A standard until major software vendors provided for the creation of this format in conjunction with standard word processing packages. Most vendors now do so.

All versions of CM/ECF accept PDF/A today. Features in upcoming releases will enable courts to *require* that all documents be filed in PDF/A format.

At this time, there is no set specific target date for requiring that all new documents be filed in PDF/A. And there has been no decision as to whether there will be a coordinated nationwide plan for all courts to begin enforcement of the PDF/A requirement on the same date. Those will be topics for consideration over the coming months.

For now, attorneys are encouraged to begin their preparations for the transition to PDF/A.

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