



UNITED STATES DISTRICT
COURT FOR THE DISTRICT
OF COLUMBIA

ECF INFO:

ECF Helplines:

Civil: (202) 354-3190

Criminal: (202) 354-3060

Hours: 9:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
(Except Holidays)

ECF Emails:

Civil:

dcd_cmecf@dcd.uscourts.gov

Criminal:

dcd_cmecfcr@dcd.uscourts.gov

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Linking Matters	2
ECF Email Usage	2
ECF is Here!	3
Entered in Error	3
Open Text Fields	4
Sealed Documents	4
Sign(ature) Language	5
Certificates of Service	6
New Case Documents	6
How Do I File...	7
Just a Reminder	7
Burning Questions	7
ECF Password Request	8
Online Payment Grows	8

ECF NEWS from the Nation's Capitol

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1

APRIL 2007

Problems with NEFs

Has your email address changed? Is a former employee of your law firm still set up to receive Notices of Electronic Filing (NEF) through your ECF user account? Have you tried responding to an NEF email and not received a reply back? Do you check your blackberry repeatedly for the NEF of an important order, only to find when you return to your desktop computer, that it was filed by the judge three hours ago and you missed it?

If you've answered yes to any of these questions, you're probably only one of many attorneys who have encountered some or all of these same problems. To shed some light on these areas, let's review the function and capabilities of an NEF.

When a document is filed in a case, ECF generates and transmits an NEF by email. As an ECF user and attorney of record, you automatically receive the NEF within seconds, alerting you to the new filing. The document link in the NEF allows you to view, save and/or print the document filed. If your email address has changed recently and you can't figure out why you haven't received an NEF in any of your cases in a while, chances are you have not updated your primary email information and your NEFs have been returned to our server undelivered.

The result for the Clerk's Office is an overwhelming number of "bounced" or returned emails. It is very important that you keep your email information correct and up to date, or you will not receive the NEFs and the Clerk's Office will be inundated with returned emails.



You can update your email information by using the "Maintain Your Account" function under the UTILITIES menu in ECF.

The same problem can occur with secondary recipients on your user account. In addition to your primary email, you may have also included some other secondary staff – administrative assistants, paralegals, etc. – on the email screen of your user account, which allows them to simultaneously receive the same NEF as you. But when one of those staff members leaves the employ of the agency or law firm and you neglect to remove their name as a secondary recipient from

your user account, the result, once again, is a bounced email back to the Clerk's Office. It is the attorney's responsibility to maintain their own user account and remove any unnecessary secondary email addresses from the system.

Also, do not respond to an NEF with a question or problem regarding the filing. The email address dcd_notice@dcd.uscourts.gov is only used for transmitting NEFs and is not regularly monitored, therefore you will not receive a timely response. If you have a question, contact the Help Desk or send a new email (or forward the NEF as reference) to our generic email addresses: (dcd_cmecf@dcd.uscourts.gov for civil and dcd_cmecfcr@dcd.uscourts.gov for criminal).

And finally, the Clerk's Office has received a number of returned emails when the attorney has chosen to automatically forward their email to their blackberry or other PDA device. These devices typically have limited storage space for emails, resulting in undelivered messages. In view of the number of returned emails that we have received, we suggest that you not delete any NEFs from your primary email account until they have been reviewed, in order to prevent accidental loss of the NEF.



Proper linkage
Is a key
component
to any filing.

Linking Matters

“When I am filing a document, I often see the screen that says ‘**Should the document you are filing link to another document in this case?**’ Why is linkage so important, and how do I know what I should link my document to?”

If you have ever found yourself wondering this same question, please read on and we’ll shed some light on the matter.

The answer is really quite simple. If your document relates or responds to another document that was previously filed, then it should link to that document. Example: A **Motion to Dismiss** is filed. Opposing counsel will then file a **Memorandum in Opposition**, which should be

linked to the Motion to Dismiss. Then a **Reply to Opposition to Motion** is filed and is again linked to the Motion to Dismiss.

In our example, the Motion to Dismiss is the document that initiated all of the action. Therefore, all of the documents relating to that motion should be linked back to it, including a Motion for Extension of Time to respond to that motion, or a Motion for Expedited Ruling regarding that motion. If done properly, all documents relating to that motion will appear together when the judge runs a pending motions report. This will make it very easy for the judge to examine and consider every aspect of the motion.

If you are filing an objec-

tion or response to something other than a motion, use one of the categories that can be found under “Oppositions and Replies” (or “Responses and Replies” in criminal), such as Response to (non-motion) Document, Reply to (non-motion) Document, or Supplemental Memorandum. These events will allow counsel to link to any document filed on the docket.

When in doubt as to which document to link to, if any, just remember to link to the document that initiated the action. If you are still unsure, call the ECF Helpline *before* filing.

(Contributing Source: *The EWave*; U. S. District Court for the District of Utah; Volume 8, May 2006).

ECF Email Usage

The Clerk’s Office has experienced some abuse by filers in submitting documents through the ECF email box, rather than filing the documents directly to ECF. There are only a few instances when using the ECF email box is acceptable. So let’s review them.

You are permitted to use the ECF email box to file your documents:

- When an attorney is currently not yet a registered filer and is awaiting receipt of his ECF login and password. First-time filers are allowed one “free pass” to file their documents via email. After that, they will be expected to file their own documents directly in ECF.
- When submitting the complaint and other initiat-

ing documents to aid in filing a new case (after first filing it in paper). Ideally, the original complaint should be accompanied with all relevant documents on a disk in PDF format. But you do have 24 hours within filing the original complaint to submit your documents in PDF format, and it is acceptable to do so via email.

- When the party filing the document is not yet a party to the case, such as when filing a Motion to Intervene or a Motion for Leave Appear *Amicus Curiae*. In both instances it becomes necessary to use email to submit your documents so that a Clerk’s Office staff member can add your party to the case. Once the party has been added, you may post any subsequent filings di-

rectly to ECF.

- When filing a return of service (executed summons). Although you are able to file these on your own, if there is any confusion as to which docketing event to use, we prefer that you email them, rather than make an error that will need to be corrected later.

- When there is a problem or error with the ECF system. If you experience difficulties with your filing (i.e. you cannot access ECF, or the document you are responding to is not on the docket), you are allowed to submit your documents via email.

Any documents or issues that do not meet one of these five criteria should be filed directly to the docket using the ECF system.

LEARN MORE!
ECF Training is
available for
attorneys and their
staff on most
Tuesdays and
Thursdays. Here is
the April schedule:
4/5/07 - 2 p.m.
4/10/07 - 10 a.m.
4/19/07 - 10 a.m.
4/26/07 - 10 a.m.

For more
information, visit
our website at:
[www.
dcd.uscourts.gov](http://www.dcd.uscourts.gov)

ECF 3.0 is Here!

You may have noticed some changes to the CM/ECF system recently. That's because the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia has rolled out ECF Version 3.0, which made its debut on March 12, 2007. This latest version of our electronic filing system includes a number of new details and features, some big and some small, for both civil and criminal filers. Most of the major (and helpful!) upgrades and features will only effect the Clerk's Office. But here are a few of the changes you may see:

- Better distinction between CM/ECF and PACER for users logging into the system.

- Access to PDF documents by PACER users without first running a Docket Report.

- New and detailed maintenance features under account email settings, including format, delivery method and additional options.

- Condensed format to the Notice of Electronic Filing.

- More detailed instruction when adding an attachment during docketing.

- Billing cap warning for PACER users.

For details and a complete listing of ECF Version 3.0 upgrades and changes, go to our website at:



<http://www.dcd.uscourts.gov/ecf-info.html>, and click on **Version 3.0 Attorney Information**. For questions or problems, call the ECF Helplines: Civil (202) 354-3190; Criminal (202) 354-3060.

Docket entries that are termed "entered in error," do not get deleted from the docket.

Entered in Error

A number of questions arise from both sides of a case when a document has been filed incorrectly and is "entered in error": "Will the entry be deleted?" "If my response was due yesterday, do I need to file a Motion to Extend Time before refiling my document?" "How long do I have to respond to a document that was filed wrong?" Your questions shall now be answered!

When a document is filed incorrectly, regardless of the reason, the Clerk's Office does not delete that entry. In order to keep a clean record of everything that has been filed in a case, it is necessary to leave even incorrect entries in tact. Instead of deleting it, we will edit the entry to include the words "ENTERED IN ERROR" at the beginning of the docket

text. Once this is done, the entry is considered "invisible" on the docket and should be ignored as a valid filing.



The Clerk's Office will contact you to alert you of the error and direct you to refile your document correctly. A common misconception is that since the document was due the day it was filed, and will now be refiled on a later date,

it is now considered late and further steps need to be taken to rectify the situation. This is false. You have 24 hours from being notified to correct the filing and it will still be considered filed as of the original filing date. Therefore, no Motion to Extend Time is needed.

However, if you fail to correct the problem within 24 hours, the Court may extend time for opposing counsel to respond to your document. Unless otherwise ordered by the Court, the response time to a motion, for example, officially begins when your original entry of that motion was made, even though it ended up entered in error. If you delay in refiling your motion correctly, opposing counsel has the right to ask for an extension based on your untimely refiling.

Docket Entries can become cluttered and complicated when unnecessary language is added to the open text fields.

Open Text Fields

An open text field is the blank text box(es) that appear(s) in a docket entry before the final submission screen. The role of an open text field is a simple one: to allow the filing attorney to *enhance* and *clarify* their docket entry by adding additional text to it. That text will then appear *italicized* in the final docket entry.

Though the open text fields do not have a charac-

ter limit and allow for vast and detailed descriptions of your filing, we encourage you to **keep it brief**. Many a simple docket entry has been complicated and cluttered by redundant and extensive language. Here are a few rules of thumb to follow:

- DO NOT repeat words that are already generated by the entry itself.
- DO NOT add the filer's name or party type. The

entry automatically includes that information in the docket text.

- DO NOT describe additional parts of the document that are included, such as the memorandum of law or exhibits.
- DO add only those words that will enhance the entry.
- DO make your entry as concise as possible without being redundant.

See insert for examples:

Wrong:

Consent MOTION for Extension of Time to File Answer Defendant United States of America's Consent Motion for Extension of Time to File Answer or Otherwise Respond to the Complaint, and Memorandum of Points and Authorities in Support Thereof with Exhibits A-J by USA (atty6,)

Right:

Consent MOTION for Extension of Time to File Answer or Otherwise Respond to the Complaint by USA (atty6,)

Filing Sealed Documents

The Clerk's Office is seeing an increasing delay in receiving sealed material from attorneys once they have been filed in ECF. So let's review the proper procedure for filing sealed documents.

To file a Motion to Seal, first file your motion in ECF by selecting "Motions," then "Seal a Document" from the drop down menu. **Only attach your motion to the entry; do not attach the sealed document as an exhibit.** Once the entry has been made, it is very important that you submit paper copies (including a courtesy copy for chambers) of the motion and the document you want sealed to the Clerk's Office **the same**

day. To delay delivery of the proposed sealed document will delay the Court's ruling on the motion.

If a protective order already exists in a case and a Motion to Seal is not necessary, first create a Notice of Sealed Document and convert it to a PDF. Then make the entry in ECF that corresponds with the sealed document you intend to file. For example, if the sealed document you are filing is a Memorandum in Opposition, then make an entry in ECF using the event "Memorandum in Opposition," but **instead of attaching the opposition to the entry, attach your Notice of Sealed Document** in its place. This will create the entry in

ECF without revealing your sealed document to the public. And, as with a Motion to Seal, it is very im-



portant that you then submit paper copies of your

Notice of Sealed Document and Memorandum in Opposition (for example) to the Clerk's Office **the same day.**

Also, please be sure to file your documents in an **unsealed envelope.** Sealed envelopes must go through a special mail-handling process and could further delay delivery to chambers.

Sign(ature) Language

Some of the biggest problems we face in the world of ECF can be summarized into one category: Signatures. Pretty much any topic you can think of with regards to signatures has cropped up as a question in the modern era of electronic filing. *Does the signing attorney have to be a member of the bar of the District of Columbia? Should I sign my document with a pen, or is a "/s/" good enough? Does one "/s/" apply to all attorneys listed in the signature block? Is my ECF login my signature, or is the actual signature on the document the only one that matters? I don't have an ECF login. Can my colleague use their login to file my document?* Let's tackle each of these questions one by one.

"Does the signing attorney have to be a member of the bar of the District of Columbia?": Yes and no. An attorney who practices law from an office inside the District of Columbia (DC) does need to be a member of the DC bar. However, more importantly, the signing attorney must be an active member in good standing of the Bar of this Court. Local Rule 5.1(e)(2) says: "By signing a pleading or paper that is presented to the Court, an attorney is certifying that the attorney, and all other attorneys appearing with the attorney on the pleading or paper, are members of, or have a pending application for admission to, the Bar of this Court, or has complied with LCvR 83.2(c) or (d), or is covered by LCvR 83.2(e) as an attorney employed by the United States or one of its agencies."

Alternatively, an attorney practicing law in another state would not need to be a member of the DC Bar or the Bar of this Court, but would have to be sponsored by an active attorney to appear in a case *pro hac vice*. Local Rule 83.2(c) says: "An attorney who is a member in good standing of the bar of any United States Court or of the highest court of any State, but who is not a member of the Bar of this Court, may file papers in this Court only if such attorney joins of record a member in good standing of the Bar of this Court. All papers submitted by non-members

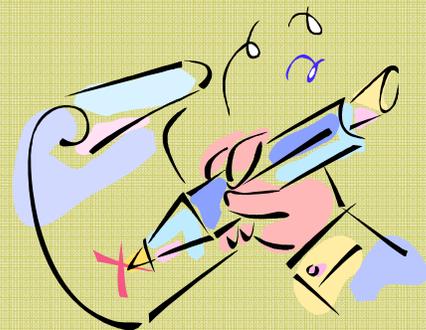
of the Bar of this Court must be signed by such counsel and by a member of the Bar of this Court joined in compliance with this Rule."

"Should I sign my document with a pen, or is a '/s/' good enough?": Using a "/s/" and your typed name (i.e. /s/ John Smith) on the signature line is a valid and sufficient form of signing a document. We recommend this form of electronic signature because it allows the filer to save their document directly to a PDF file. The alternative, when signing in pen, is to print out the document, sign it, then scan it to a PDF. Scanning may reduce the quality of the document, makes the PDF document larger than it needs to be, and can therefore take longer to download to the ECF system. So a "/s/" is the better way to go on all documents, including affidavits and declarations (an originally signed document can be maintained in the possession of the attorney responsible for the filing).

"Does one '/s/' apply to all attorneys listed in the signature block?": NO. The "/s/" by itself on a signature line only applies to the first attorney listed in the signature block. For example, John Smith is the attorney filing the pleading in ECF using his login and password. But Mr. Smith's name appears third in the signature block below Jane Doe and Jim Jones, and only an "/s/" appears on the signature line. In this example, Jane Doe is considered the signing attorney on the document, and since the ECF filer is John Smith, this filing does not conform to the filing rules of this Court.

Solutions to this common problem include: giving each attorney their own signature line with their own "/s/"; or signing the document with a "/s/" followed by the signing attorney's name (i.e. /s/ John Smith), thereby specifying which attorney listed in the signature block is the actual filing attorney.

Separate signature lines are especially important when a *pro hac vice* attorney is submitting a filing. All documents filed by a *pro hac vice* attorney should include a "/s/" for his/her name, as well as a "/s/" for the local sponsoring attorney.



"Is my ECF login my signature, or is the actual signature on the document the only one that matters?": The answer to this question is that they both matter. The ECF login and password works in conjunction with your signed document to create a valid docket entry. Local Rule 5.4(b)(4) says: "The use of a CM/ECF password to login and submit documents creates an electronic record that operates and serves as the signature of the person to whom the password is assigned for all purposes under the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and the Local Rules of this Court." This is why it is very important to realize that the **signing attorney on the document must be the same as the attorney who files the document in ECF**. There are many times that the filing attorney may be the second, third, or even fourth attorney of record in the case, and their "/s/" signature does not appear on the document. When in doubt, just remember this rule of thumb: Whoever plans to file the pleading or paper in ECF using their login and password, needs to be one of the signing attorneys on the document itself. We may have let this discrepancy slide in the past, but will be enforcing it from now on.

"I don't have an ECF login. Can my colleague use their login to file my document?": NO. Under no circumstances should an attorney not of record file a document in a case simply because he or she has an ECF login and you don't. Only active members in good standing of the Bar of this Court and who legally represent a party to the case may make an electronic filing in that case. Documents that are filed by attorneys not involved in the case are unacceptable and will be entered in error.

A certificate of service is only necessary when parties in the case will not receive electronic notice of a filing, or when the ECF email box is used.

Certificates of Service

Before filing your document in ECF, it is important to be aware of who in the case will receive electronic notice of the filing, and who will not. If there is a party who is pro se, or an attorney who has not yet registered for an ECF login and password, and therefore will not receive electronic notification, it is necessary to serve that party/attorney by mail or email, and to file a certificate of service with your document.

To check the service list for the case prior to filing, go to: **UTILITIES >> Mailings >> Mailing Info for a Case**. Enter the

case number you wish to check and click **[SUBMIT]**. A Mailing Information report for that case will be generated, showing which parties are on the "Electronic Mail Notice List," and which are on the "Manual Notice List." If you have determined that a certificate of service is necessary for those parties appearing on the "Manual Notice List," it must state the manner in which service or notice was accomplished for each designated party, and **should be filed with your document, not as a separate entry**.

In addition to when a pro se party or unregistered ECF user is involved in a case, a certificate of service also becomes necessary when your filing is submitted to the ECF email box. If you experience difficulties with your filing and have to use the ECF email box, be sure to include a certificate of service with your documents, even if all parties will be notified electronically through ECF when your document is filed, or if you have cc'ed all other parties on your email.

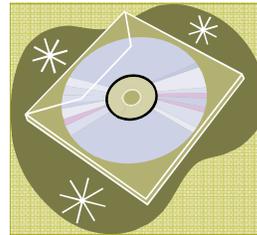
CHECK YOUR PDF!

There is a size limit and scanning requirement for all PDFs. The file size of each PDF should not exceed 2MB (about 30 pages). Documents should be scanned at 200-250 dpi (dots per inch) and in blank and white only.

New Case Documents

When filing a new civil case, in addition to filing a paper copy of the complaint or notice of removal and any accompanying papers (civil cover sheet, exhibits, LCvR 7.1 certificate, motions, etc.), litigants are required to provide those filings in PDF format on a floppy or compact disk.

The disk should be clearly labeled with the case number (if known) and the name of the document. If you are unable to deliver your documents to the Clerk's Office on disk at the time of filing, you must email the **complaint OR notice of removal**, and accompanying papers to dcd_cmecef@dcd.uscourts.gov by the close of business the day the com-



plaint was filed. **(Please note: The complaint from Superior Court does not need to be submitted when filing a notice of removal, unless intended as an exhibit to the notice itself).**

Failure to supply electronic copies of your complaint or notice of removal in a timely manner, will result in your name being added to the attorney non-compliant list and shared with the Court's ECF Judge Committee. Regardless of

which option you choose, the complaint/notice and accompanying papers must come to the Court as PDF documents. **(One exception: Summons should ONLY be submitted in paper, NOT as PDF documents).** It is important to remember that each exhibit to the complaint is required to be a separate PDF file, no matter how many there are. Failure to submit PDF versions of the complaint/notice and other documents will also delay the opening of the case in ECF.

Contributing Source: Reprinted as a reminder from *Civil ECF Filing Pointers* (<http://www.dcd.uscourts.gov/ECF-Filing-Pointers.html>).

How Do I File...

...an Ex Parte Motion?:

Ex Parte Motions should be filed with the Clerk's Office in **paper format only**, and should include a courtesy copy for chambers. **DO NOT FILE EX PARTE MOTIONS ELECTRONICALLY IN ECF.** According to the District of Idaho's glossary of legal terms, the word "ex parte" means: "on behalf of only one party, without notice to any other party." ECF will automatically send a Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) to every party and/or attorney involved in the case, therefore allowing them to view your motion and rendering

the term "ex parte" absolutely useless. If you do not want the opposing side to see your motion, then you must file it in paper.

...a Meet and Confer Statement?

Any statement regarding a discovery meeting pursuant to Local Rule 16.3, or FRCvP 26(f), is considered a Meet and Confer Statement and should be filed as such. The most common error is when a Meet and Confer Statement is filed incorrectly as a Status Report.

You can find the entry for Meet and Confer Statement under

Other Documents on the ECF Civil docketing menu. You will not be asked to select the filer of the document, since it is assumed that it is filed on behalf of all parties. Simply attach your PDF document (or documents if you are including a separate proposed scheduling order) and SUBMIT to the end of the entry.

BRUSH UP!

We encourage you to brush up on the latest ECF news, especially if it's been a while since your last filing. Previous editions of *ECF News from the Nation's Capitol* can be found on our website at:

<http://www.dcd.uscourts.gov/ECF-Newsletters.html>

Just a Reminder

- **No Discovery!** Pursuant to Local Rule 5.2(a): Unless otherwise directed by the Court, "...interrogatories, depositions, requests for documents, requests for admissions, and answers and responses thereto shall be served upon other counsel and parties but **shall not be filed with the Clerk...**" This rule also applies to Certificates of Discovery. The only time discovery documents should be filed in ECF is as exhibits to a motion regarding discovery.

- **A Motion is one entry!** A motion, it's supporting memorandum and all exhibits thereto should be filed as one entry in ECF. The motion should be the first document uploaded to the entry. On that same screen, where it says "Attachments to Document?," select "Yes." Then on the next screen, upload the memorandum, followed by all other exhibits, attachments and declarations. This practice also applies to statements of material fact (including re-

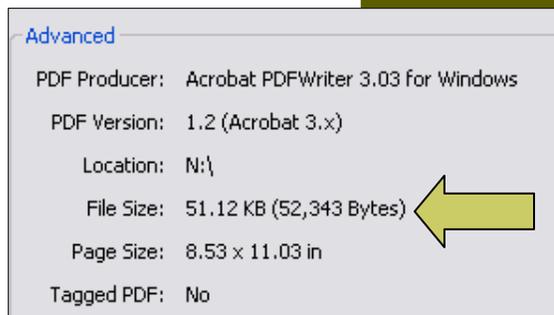
sponses thereto). All parts of the motion should be one entry.

- **Don't wait until the last minute to file!** A lot of filing errors can be attributed to late-night filing when the filing party is in a hurry, frustrated, or just plain tired. Whenever possible, we encourage you to begin your filing well in advance of the deadline. You never know what kind of problems you may encounter, so it is just best to give yourself plenty of time to make a clean and precise entry.

Burning Questions

How do I select multiple filers for one entry? While holding the <CTRL> (control) key down, left click with your mouse on each filer you wish to select. When you are done, all of the appropriate filers should be highlighted. Continue with your filing as usual. As long as it is a joint filing, there is no need to make separate entries for each separate filer.

How do I check the size of my PDF document? With the document open in Adobe, click on FILE. Then click on DOCUMENT PROPERTIES from the drop down menu. The file size is shown towards the bottom of the Description screen (see image at right). Anything over 2 MG (2000 KB) should be split up into smaller files before uploading to ECF.



ECF PASSWORD REQUEST NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE!

You can now request a new ECF password online! Here's how:

- Log on to www.dcd.uscourts.gov.
- Select **Electronic Case Filing** from the sidebar menu.
- Select **Forgot your ECF password? Click here for a new one.**
- Complete the information on the next screen, which appears as follows:

CM/ECF User Password Reset

Requirements: A user requesting a new password for CM/ECF must already be registered and a member in good standing with the Court.

Instructions: Complete and submit this form online to request a new password from the United States District Court, District of Columbia. Entry fields are not case-sensitive, but must otherwise match database entries already on file for successful verification. **After verification, your user id and password will be emailed to the specified address on file.**

Name (First, Last):

Email Address: (Format xxx@xxxx.xxx)

Last 4 digits of SSN:

By submitting this form, I hereby agree to abide by the [CM/ECF Terms Of Use](#).

Online Payment Grows

The U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia is one of a growing number of federal trial courts that have begun accepting credit cards online for payment of various filing fees. The Court began accepting online payment for appeal fees in August 2006.

"No longer must a notice of appeal be filed in person with the Clerk's Office," said Greg Hughes, Chief Deputy of Operations for the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. "The introduction of online payment has been a great addition to the Clerk's Office and counsel."

Twenty-one district courts accept credit card payments for a variety of fees – for opening a case, filing a notice of appeal, motion filings, and attorney admission – in civil cases. From April through June of 2006, those 21 courts collected \$514,152 in fees paid online.

That's an increase from the previous three months, when 13 district courts collected \$403,293 in such payments.

"A lot of attorneys have become accustomed to the benefits of electronic filing," said Joe Burgess, ECF Coordinator for the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. "Now they are able to take that convenience one step further by saving one more trip to the courthouse and paying their appeal fees online."

Another 21 courts have completed

the logistical work needed to offer the remote fee-paying option, and 18 more are either in that process, or plan to start it.

Implementation is divided into two phases. The first includes creating the necessary accounts with Bank of America and Pay.gov, a project within the U.S. Treasury Department. The second phase requires integrating Pay.gov with the Case Management/Electronic Case Filing (CM/ECF) system and a court's fee-collection process.

"Our court does things a little differently with regards to our attorney database and attorney renewal format," said Peggy O'Brien, OIT CM/ECF Administrator for the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. "So it took a little longer to configure the docketing events to allow attorneys to use Pay.gov. Otherwise, the transition went very well and we haven't had any glaring problems since its implementation."

Bankruptcy courts are ahead of the district courts in implementing fee payments by credit card. In the first three months of 2006, 77 bankruptcy courts collected \$33.8 million in credit card payments from 148,940 transactions. The U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Columbia has been accepting online payment for opening new cases, motions and various other fees since

June of 2005.

For courts, credit card payments reduce the number of checks returned for insufficient funds. CM/ECF will prevent electronic filing if a credit card is declined.

"Using Pay.gov not only ensures that funds are available before the filing is processed," said Alfreda Ludd, Financial Administrator for the U. S. District Court for the District of Columbia, "but it also saves time processing the mail and reduces foot traffic at the cashier's window."

For attorneys, credit card payments offer some of the same benefits as electronic filing: Time and money saved by foregoing the need for runners or messengers to bring payment to the courthouse, and the ability to file and pay court-specified fees 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

"The use and success of Pay.gov lends itself to other filings as well," said Hughes. "The Clerk's Office will continue to examine the practicality of extending online payment to cover other court fees in the future."

For more information on online payment of appeal fees, please visit our website at www.dcd.uscourts.gov/ecf-info.html.

(Contributing Source: The Third Branch; Vol. 38, Number 11 – November 2006).