

CM/ECF PDF Requirements

PDF Restrictions in NEXTGEN CM/ECF

The United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Maryland is a NextGen CM/ECF court. NextGen updates how ECF receives documents and ensures documents meet the court's formatting requirements. If a party tries to file a document that does not meet the requirements below, the document will be rejected. If that happens, the simplest way to correct most issues is to flatten the PDF, then upload the replacement. See below for instructions for flattening a PDF.

NEXTGEN'S Document Standards

Documents that meet the following standards can be filed via NextGen CM/ECF with our court:

- File size of 50MB or smaller
- Meets the PDF/A standard
- Scanned documents
- Created with Mac OS X and:
 - Using a fillable form in the Chrome web browser
 - Using MS Word and saved by selecting the option "Best for Electronic Distribution"
- Contains hyperlinks to external websites
- Contains editable forms
- Contains optical character recognition (OCR) metadata (allows text-recognition and text searches)

Documents NEXTGEN Prohibits

Documents with the following features cannot be filed via NextGen CM/ECF with our court:

- File size over 50MB
- Files in a format other than PDF/A. Examples of non-compliant formatting include:
 - Contains JavaScript
 - Contains audio or video content
 - Encrypted or password protected
 - Contains scripts which can launch an external application (like external font programs or data streams)

CM/ECF Document Requirements (cont.)

- Contains internal attachments or embedded files
- Created with Mac OS X and:
 - Using a fillable form in the Safari web browser
 - Using MS Word and saved by selecting the option “Best for printing”

How to Flatten a PDF

The simplest way to address most PDF upload rejections is to flatten the PDF and then upload it to CM/ECF again. Here are the steps to flatten a PDF:

1. Open your PDF in Adobe Acrobat or another tool
2. Print the PDF file to your PDF printer (File>Print>select Adobe PDF or another PDF printer in the drop-down list)
3. Save the printed PDF and upload that new document into CM/ECF

NOTE: If you are using Nuance, it contains a flatten file feature which can be found by selecting Advanced Processing>Flatten File.