

*Case Management/Electronic Case Files (CM/ECF)* is a convenient new automated case management system designed specifically for the federal courts. The case management and docketing (CM) portion replaces the aging software currently used by most courts with a nationally-supported but flexible system that provides customizable docketing and reporting capability. The electronic case files (ECF) portion allows courts to manage documents electronically; provide 24-hour desktop access to case files by judges, court staff, and the public; and accept filings over the Internet.

### **Why Develop a New Case Management System?**

The new system was developed:

- To replace existing case management systems that are aging and will soon exceed their projected life spans.
- Because the database program underlying existing systems is no longer supported by its manufacturer and is increasingly difficult and expensive to maintain.
- To offer courts enhanced capabilities using updated technology.

### **What Does CM Offer?**

CM will not only offer capabilities of previous case management systems developed by the Administrative Office of the Courts, but expands on them by providing:

- User-friendly screens for data entry.
- Easier case information retrieval and reporting.
- Generation of reports from a single integrated system, including docket activity reports and monthly calendar reports.

### **What are Electronic Case Files?**

Electronic case files (ECF) are documents stored in electronic format (soft) instead of on paper (hard). Parties and court staff can create documents electronically or paper copies can be scanned. All electronic documents in CM/ECF are stored in Portable Document Format (PDF).

### **What Does ECF Offer?**

The ECF portion of the system is easy to use and allows a court to store, retrieve, review, and send case documents in a reliable and secure electronic format. ECF can also offer the following benefits:

- 24-hour/7-day access to case files from any location (bench, chambers, home, office) over the Internet.
- Remote document filing and docketing.
- Concurrent access to files.
- Immediate e-mail notification of case activity to parties and court staff.
- Reduced need for physical file space.
- Easy public access.
- Secure storage of documents.
- Continued use of paper documents if desired.



**What is the Timeline for Implementation  
of CM/ECF in the United States  
Bankruptcy Court for the  
District of Colorado?**

The United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Colorado implemented the CM portion of the system for internal court users on January 7, 2002. The Court plans to implement the ECF portion of the system for external electronic filers in the Fall of 2002. Prior to participation in the ECF system, external electronic filers will be required to complete a training program administered by the Court.

In addition, there are certain *hardware, software, and Internet requirements* for external electronic filers. These requirements are:

**Hardware:**

- Personal computer (PC) with a standard operating system (i.e. Windows 95 (OSR 2.0), Windows 98, Windows Millennium, Windows 2000, or Windows NT (4.0 w/ Service Pack 5 or 6)); 64 MB or more of RAM; 115 MB of hard disk space; and a CD ROM drive. A Pentium (or equivalent) based processor is suggested as the processor speed of the PC could impact the response time of the CM/ECF application.
- Macintosh with Mac OS 8.8, 9.0.4, or 9.1; 64 MB or more of RAM; 105 MB of hard disk space; and a CD ROM drive.
- Scanner for documents that are not available in electronic format.
- Modem that is at least 56K. Connection can be made at speeds less than 56K, however response time may be less than optimal.

**Software:**

- **Netscape Navigator**, version 4.6 or higher or **Microsoft Internet Explorer** version 5.5.
- **Adobe Acrobat Writer** to convert documents from word processing format to Portable Document Format (PDF) or to save scanned documents to PDF.  
*Note: The Adobe Acrobat Reader software that is available at no cost on the Adobe website does not allow for conversion of documents to PDF.*
- Word processing package such as Microsoft Word or WordPerfect.

**Internet:**

- An Internet Service Provider (ISP) using point-to-point protocol (PPP). It is recommended that the provider be capable of a minimum connection speed of 56K. High-speed access (i.e. ISDN, cable modem, and DSL) is recommended for attorneys who plan to do a high volume of electronic filing.

**Questions?**

The United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Colorado welcomes questions on the CM/ECF application. For more information, please contact:

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