

# ATTORNEY STYLE GUIDE

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This guide contains the preferred style practices for all users of the CM-ECF application in the Eastern District of New York. The intention of the guide is to make everyone's task easier, whether they are entering data or inquiring into the CM-ECF data base. The application of a common set of styles when creating docket entries results in information being captured and displayed in more uniform and predictable ways, thus reducing confusion and errors. In addition, style consistency is the key to efficient searches in the CM-ECF, since successful queries require very exact matches on search data including punctuation, abbreviations and upper or lower case.

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## STATE & TERRITORY ABBREVIATIONS

AL	Alabama	MS	Mississippi
AK	Alaska	MT	Montana
AZ	Arizona	NE	Nebraska
AR	Arkansas	NV	Nevada
AS	American Samoa	NH	New Hampshire
CA	California	NJ	New Jersey
CO	Colorado	NM	New Mexico
CT	Connecticut	NY	New York
DE	Delaware	NC	North Carolina
DC	District of Columbia	ND	North Dakota
FL	Florida	MP	N. Mariana Isl.
GA	Georgia	OH	Ohio
GU	Guam	OK	Oklahoma
HI	Hawaii	OR	Oregon
ID	Idaho	PW	Palau
IL	Illinois	PA	Pennsylvania
IN	Indiana	PR	Puerto Rico
IA	Iowa	RI	Rhode Island
KS	Kansas	SC	South Carolina
KY	Kentucky	SD	South Dakota
LA	Louisiana	TN	Tennessee
ME	Maine	TX	Texas
MH	Marshall Island	UT	Utah
MD	Maryland	VT	Vermont
MA	Massachusetts	VA	Virginia
MX	Mexico	VI	Virgin Islands
MI	Michigan	WA	Washington
TT	Micronesia	WV	West Virginia
MN	Minnesota	WI	Wisconsin
MO	Missouri	WY	Wyoming

# HOW TO PREPARE A CREDITOR MATRIX

The following instructions will guide you to correctly format a creditor matrix.

A creditor matrix contains creditor information, such as the creditor's name and mailing address. This information is used for noticing, and claims information, when applicable. ***The creditor matrix must be in a .txt file before it can be successfully uploaded into the CM/ECF system.***

## **Creditor Matrix Specifications**

- ◆ The name and address of each creditor must be five (5) lines or less. List creditors ONLY - do not include debtor, attorney or US Trustee.
- ◆ Each line may contain no more than 40 characters including blanks.
- ◆ Names and addresses should be left justified (flush against the left margin, no leading blanks.)
- ◆ The creditors name must be on the first line. Do not include account numbers. Avoid using punctuation (periods, commas) in names and addresses.
- ◆ "Attention" lines should be placed on the second line of the name/address.
- ◆ City, state and ZIP code must be on the last line.
- ◆ Nine digit ZIP codes must be typed with a hyphen separating the two groups of digits.
- ◆ All states must be two-letter capital abbreviations.
- ◆ Do not include page numbers, headers, footers, etc.
- ◆ Each creditor must be separated by at least one blank line.

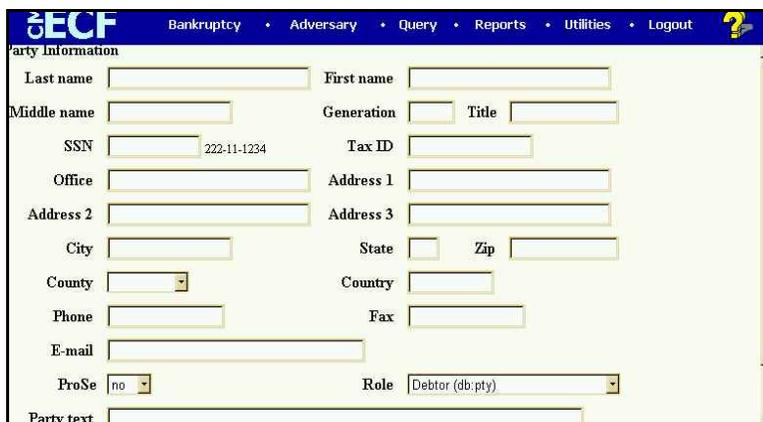
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***Note: Diskette should be labeled as Creditor Matrix, the Debtor's Name, and the Number of Creditors on the disk.***

# HOW TO ADD PARTIES

***When Adding New Parties to the CM-ECF Data Base, the Names and Addresses Should Conform with the Criteria Listed below.***

Much of case opening in CM-ECF consists of adding the names of debtors, joint debtors, plaintiffs and defendants to cases. As cases progress, creditors and other parties are added as well. Access to this information is vital to the court, the bar and the general public.



The image shows a screenshot of the CM-ECF web application's 'Party Information' form. The form is titled 'Party Information' and includes a navigation bar with links for 'Bankruptcy', 'Adversary', 'Query', 'Reports', 'Utilities', and 'Logout'. The form fields are organized as follows:

- Last name:
- First name:
- Middle name:
- Generation:
- Title:
- SSN:  (example: 222-11-1234)
- Tax ID:
- Office:
- Address 1:
- Address 2:
- Address 3:
- City:
- State:
- Zip:
- County:
- Country:
- Phone:
- Fax:
- E-mail:
- ProSe:  (example: no)
- Role:  (example: Debtor (db.pty))
- Party text:

## Party Names

- ***Use upper and lower case for all names and capitalize the first letter in a proper noun. Use single spacing between all names.***

Wallace D Smith  
United Services Fidelity and Guaranty

- ***Do not use punctuation between initials and names.***

J J Jones  
Smith Inc  
C W Bradford Ltd

- ***When typing names that have upper and lower case letters or hyphens, do not insert spaces.***

Patricia DeLaGarza  
Patrick MacDougal  
Kathleen O'Brien  
Mary Smith-Baker

- ***If an individual does not have a middle name, leave that field blank.***

Do not enter “NMI” (no middle initial).

- ***If a party has multiple names such as Robert John Kennedy Martin, add the extra names in the Middle Name box.***

Last name: Martin  
Middle name: John Kennedy  
First name: Robert

- ***Business names should be entered entirely in the Last Name box.***

Do not use the First Name or Middle Name box when entering business names.

- ***Do not use the ampersand sign for “and” unless it is part of a company name on the petition or pleading.***

B & D Company  
Cameron & Associates

- ***Avoid abbreviations unless it is part of a company name on the petition or pleading.***

- Ford Motor Company ☹ Ford Motor Co
- First Federal Association ☹ 1<sup>st</sup> Federal Assoc

- ***Enter US and USA without any spaces or punctuation.***

US Department of Agriculture  
US Trustee  
US Attorney  
US Environmental Protection Agency  
US Nuclear Regulatory Commission

# HOW TO ADD PARTY ADDRESSES

- **Abbreviate post office addresses without a space or punctuation between the P and O, spell out Box.**

PO Box 1359      or      PO Drawer 34321

- **In general it is best to type out the entire name of the street designator.**

If there is a necessity to abbreviate, use the following:

Avenue = Ave	Lane = Ln
Boulevard = Blvd	Road = Rd
Highway = Hwy	Street = St

**When there is a street address as well as a post office box address for a debtor, add only the post office address.**

John J. Johnson  
PO Box 1477  
4218 Elmwood Lane *(Eliminate this line)*  
Bentonville AR 40453

- **When needed, use the second and or third line of the address for building name, suite number, floor, firm name, or attention**

Arthur Andersen and Associates  
Attention: Terri Brooks  
John Hancock Building Ste 2600  
8723 Michigan Avenue  
Chicago IL 60604

- **If the address contains an apartment number, unit number, or suite number you may abbreviate: Apt, Unit or Ste in place of the word.**

Barbara Bixby  
322 West Shady Lane Apt 334  
Austin TX 78701

- **When identifying an apartment, suite or a unit in the address field it should be on the second or third line of the address. Do not use the “#” to refer to the number.**

If there is a necessity to abbreviate, use the following:

Apartment = Apt      Suite = Ste      Unit = Unit

If an address has geographic directions use the following:

North = N    Northeast = NE            East = E    Southeast = SE  
South = S    Southwest = SW            West = W    Northwest = NW

ie. John Smith  
100 NW 10<sup>th</sup> Street  
Washington DC 10001

- **The city, state and zip must be the only information on the last address line.**
- ***Use the full ten digit zip code if at all possible.***

ie. Queens NY 11122-2355

- ***Use c/o to indicate "In Care Of".***

Manuel Ortega Jr  
c/o Manuel Ortega Sr  
6612 East 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
El Paso TX 79901

- ***Foreign Addresses - The bottom line of the address should show only the COUNTRY name, written in full (no abbreviations) and in Capital letters. Do not place the postal codes (zip codes) of foreign country designations on the last line of the address. Do no underline the COUNTRY name.***

INGE DIETRIC-FISCHER  
HARTMANNSTRASSE 7  
5300 BONN 1  
GERMANY

- ***Military Addresses or APO Destinations - Overseas military addresses must contain the APO or FPO designations along with a two-character "state" abbreviation of AE, AP or AA and the Zip Code . This must be the only information on the bottom line of the address. (AE is used for armed forces in Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Canada; AP is for Pacific; and AA is the Americas excluding Canada).***

Sgt. John Smith  
C Company 237 Armor  
Unit 21103 Box 512  
APO AE 09014

## HOW TO SEARCH FOR PARTIES

- ***Make sure you search the CM-ECF data base for the party you want to add to a case.***

Before adding any party to a case, search for that party using name, social security number or tax ID number “search clues” where appropriate. The system is case letter sensitive so use capitals where appropriate. If the system finds the correct name, select it to help eliminate different versions of the same party name.

**\*\* Please follow the instructions below and in the style guide for the correct entry of the parties to a case or pleading**

# HOW TO CREATE NEW PARTIES

## Debtors

- **Add debtors to cases using names and addresses exactly as they appear on the petition or complaint.**

In most cases, you will NOT find debtors or joint debtors when you search the CM-ECF data base. You will have to add them to the data base and the case as a new party.

- **If a debtor has a title, add the title as “party text”.**  
(See Figure 1)

Any title that you add as party text will show up on the face of the docket report following the name and separated by a comma.

**Party Text Tips**

1. The name of the debtor without the party text description will appear in docket text.
2. Party text description will not appear on notices.
3. Party text description will appear on the face of the docket report in upper and lower case following the debtor name as shown below:  
  
Jose Garza, Administrator of the Estate of Sylvia Garza  
  
Alamo Limestone, a Texas Corporation  
  
Catherine V. Ruiz, Official Administrator of Lottery Winnings

Figure 1

**Make an entry in the SSN box or the Tax ID box even is the social security number for an individual debtor or tax identification number for a business debtor is unknown.**

SSN: 000-00-0000  
Tax ID: 00-0000000

## HOW TO ADD PLAINTIFFS AND DEFENDANTS

- *Add plaintiffs and defendants to cases using names exactly as they appear on the complaint.*
- *Do not add mailing addresses for plaintiffs or defendants. Unless they are pro-se.*
- *Do NOT add a title for plaintiffs or defendants.*

*(Note: Use the Party Text box to add a title - see figure 1)*

- *Make sure to select the plaintiff or defendant party role.*

When you are adding plaintiffs and defendants, it is very likely you will find the party you search for.

If you find a plaintiff or defendant in CM-ECF with an address, **blank out the address fields before accepting the Party Information screen.**

## HOW TO ADD CREDITORS

- ***Add creditors to cases using names already in the CM-ECF data base if at all possible.***

Creditors (such as Ford Motor Credit) are added to many different cases. Ideally, there should be only one Ford Motor Credit party in the CM-ECF data base. This greatly simplifies searching when adding parties and querying cases.

For instance, it is better to add Ford Motor Credit to all cases even if that is not the exact name used on a document being docketed. The idea is to avoid adding many different names for the same creditor. For example

- ☺ Ford Motor Credit
- ☹ Ford Motor Credit Company
- ☹ Ford Motor Credit Co.
- ☹ Ford Motor Credit Corporation
- ☹ Ford Motor Credit Company, Inc.
- ☹ Ford Motor Company
- ☹ Ford Motor Credit Corp.
- ☹ Ford Motors Credit Company
- ☹ Ford Motor Credit Company (“FMCC”)

The proliferation of different names for the same creditor makes searching frustrating and time consuming.

- ***Do not add mailing addresses for creditors. (You are their Contact Person)***

When you are creditors, it is very likely you will find the party you search for.

If you find a creditor in CM-ECF with an address, blank out the address fields before accepting the Party Information screen.

- ***Do NOT add a title for creditors.***
- ***Make sure to select the creditor party role.***