

## **Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER)**

<http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov>

### **What is PACER?**

Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER) is an electronic public access service that allows users to obtain case and docket information from Federal Appellate, District and Bankruptcy courts, and from the U.S. Party/Case Index. Electronic access is available for most courts by registering with the PACER Service Center, the judiciary's centralized registration, billing, and technical support center.

Each court maintains its own databases with case information. Because PACER database systems are maintained within each court, each jurisdiction will have a different web site. Accessing and querying information from each service is comparable; however, the format and content of information provided may differ slightly. Links are provided to most jurisdictions.

The PACER System offers an inexpensive, fast, and comprehensive case information service to any individual with a personal computer (PC) and Internet access. The PACER system permits you to request information about a particular individual or case. The data is displayed directly on your PC screen within a few seconds. The system is simple enough that little user training or documentation is required.

The District of Minnesota's PACER web site is: <https://pacer.mnd.uscourts.gov>

PACER is a service of United States Judiciary. The PACER Service Center is run by the Administrative Office of the United States Courts.

### **What does PACER have to do with CM/ECF?**

All CM/ECF users must also have a PACER account, in addition to their CM/ECF identification name and password. While most law firms already have a PACER account for use by their staff, attorneys will need to become aware of their firm's PACER id and password, or obtain a PACER id and password of their own, to access documents from the CM/ECF system. Users who do not have a PACER account will be unable to view or retrieve docket sheets or documents.

Law firms have the option of letting all their attorneys use a single PACER account or having all attorneys, or practice groups, obtain their own accounts.

### **Availability**

The PACER System is available days, nights, and weekends. You can verify all updates to active and recently closed cases without having to make repeated trips to the court to review paper records. If there have been no updates, this can be confirmed in seconds.

What you need:

- 1) A personal computer
- 2) Internet access
- 3) Javascript enabled web browser (Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator)

### **Cost**

The United States Congress has given the Judicial Conference of the United States, the judicial governing body of the U.S. Federal Courts, authority to impose user fees for electronic access to case information. All registered agencies or individuals will be charged a user fee. Access to PACER systems will generate a \$.07 per page charge. You will be billed on a quarterly basis for your transactions. You will be allowed to enter a client code of your choosing each time you login to PACER to help facilitate managing the costs.

A measure was approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in March 2001 stating that no fee is owed until a user accrues more than \$10 worth of charges in a calendar year. Consequently, if an account does not accrue \$10 worth of usage between January 1st and December 31st each year, all balances will be deleted from our records. Once the balance due exceeds \$10, a user will receive a statement by mail which includes the current and previous charges in a calendar year.

A recent decision by the Judicial Conference of the United States Courts limits the charge for a single document to 30 pages. Effective April 1, 2002, the maximum charge for an imaged copy of a document obtained from the PACER system is \$2.10. Previously, a 50 page document cost \$3.50 at 7 cents a page. This same document now only costs \$2.10. Users will receive the entire 50 page document but only be charged \$2.10. This cap applies only to imaged documents. The cap does not apply to docket sheets or reports. Each attachment in CM/ECF sites is considered a separate document. Therefore, the cap will apply to each attachment over 30 pages separately.

### **To Register**

To register, fill out one of the registration forms available on the PACER website (<http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov>). Alternatively, you may contact the PACER Service Center for a registration form at (800) 676-6856. Or write them: PACER Service Center, P.O. Box 780549, San Antonio, TX 78278-0549.

There is no cost for registering. Once the registration form is received by the PACER Service Center, you will receive a login and password in the mail within two weeks. Logins and passwords cannot be faxed, emailed, or given over the phone. For an expedited registration, contact the PACER Service Center after you complete the online registration form by telephone or email. They can send your login and password via Federal Express at your expense. You must provide the PACER Service Center with your Federal Express account number.