

Welcome! Thank you for reviewing the CM/ECF Training slides and speaker notes.

CM/ECF Overview

- e-Government Act of 2002 established a broad framework for the use of technology to enhance public access to government information and services;
- electronic case file is the process of uploading a document from a registered user's computer using the CM/ECF system to file documents in the court's case file;
- only pdf documents accepted;
- must have a registered user account; and
- allows one free look - NEF (expires after first use or 15 days).

Quick facts.



To begin case opening, at the Civil Events screen, the Civil Case hyperlink is clicked. Proceed to click on “open civil case”.

The screenshot shows a web interface for the ECF system. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the ECF logo and several menu items: Civil, Criminal, Query, Reports, Utilities, Search, and Logout. Below this, the page title is "Open a Civil Case". The form contains the following fields and controls:

- Office:** A dropdown menu with "St. Croix Division" selected.
- Case type:** A dropdown menu with "cv" selected.
- Date filed:** A text field containing "3/22/2017".
- Lead case number:** An empty text input field.
- Association type:** A dropdown menu with "Consolidated" selected.
- Other court name:** An empty text input field.
- Other court number:** An empty text input field.
- JPML number:** An empty text input field.
- Related cases:** A checkbox that is currently unchecked.
- Navigation:** Two buttons labeled "Next" and "Clear" are positioned at the bottom left of the form area.

The Office, Case type and Date filed fields, display default values. Click “Next” to proceed.

The screenshot shows the 'Open a Civil Case' form in the ECF system. The form is set against a yellow background and is framed by a white border. At the top, there is a blue navigation bar with the ECF logo and menu items: Civil, Criminal, Query, Reports, Utilities, Search, and Logout. Below the navigation bar, the title 'Open a Civil Case' is displayed. The form contains several dropdown menus and input fields. The 'Jurisdiction' dropdown is set to '3 (Federal Question)'. The 'Cause of action' dropdown is currently blank, with a 'Filter:' input field and a 'Clear filter' button to its right. The 'Nature of suit' dropdown is set to '0 (zero)', also with a 'Filter:' input field and a 'Clear filter' button. The 'Origin' dropdown is set to '1 (Original Proceeding)'. Below these are 'Citizenship plaintiff' and 'Citizenship defendant' dropdown menus. Further down, there are 'Jury demand' (set to 'n (None)'), 'Class action' (set to 'n (No Class Action Alleged)'), and 'Demand (\$000)' (input field). There are also 'Arbitration code' and 'County' (set to 'St. Croix') dropdowns. At the bottom, there are 'Fee status' (set to 'pd (paid)'), 'Fee date' (set to '3/22/2017'), and 'Date transfer' (input field). Finally, there are 'Next' and 'Clear' buttons at the bottom left of the form area.

Next, the statistical case opening screen displays. Notice that the cause of action drop-down list defaults to a blank value.

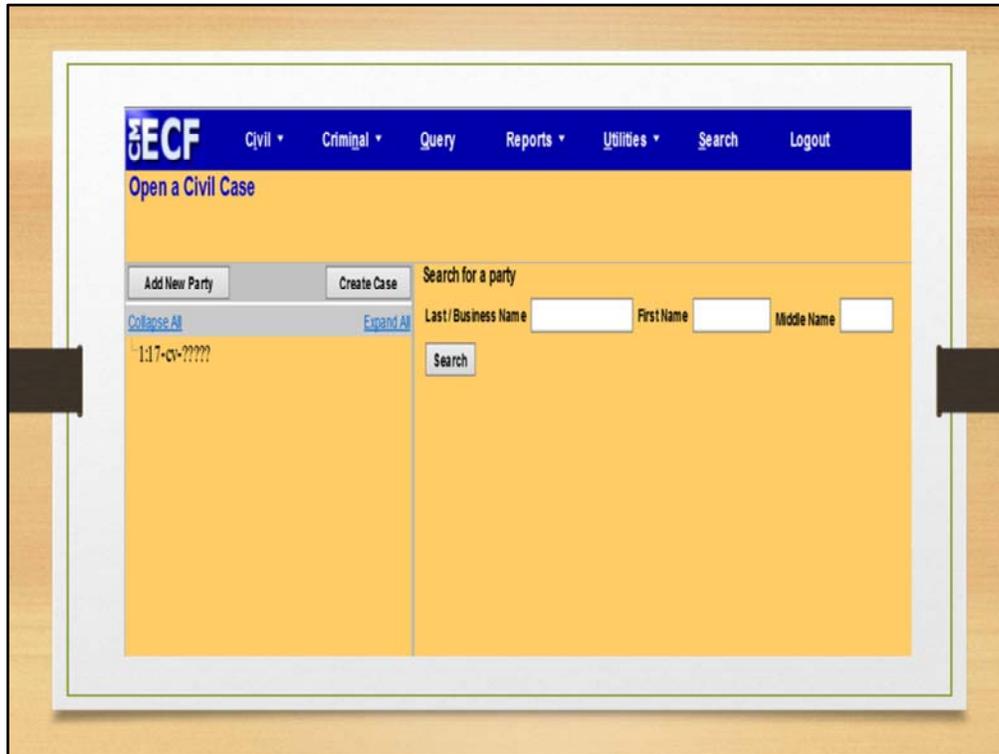
The blank value is not accepted by CM/ECF - essentially the system now forces the user to select a cause of action. Notice the cause of action and nature of suit filters.

Once a user begins entering data in the filter field, the corresponding picklist limits the selections to just the items that match the entered filter string. When entering numbers, users may enter either partial or complete filter information to locate the cause of action or nature of suit.

A user cannot proceed without making a selection in **the Jurisdiction, Cause of Action, Nature of Suit and Origin** fields.

For this example, the "Jurisdiction" **#3 Federal Question** is selected. The "Cause of Action" **28:1331, Federal Question: Employment Discrimination** is selected. The "Nature of Suit" **710, Labor: Fair Standards** is selected. In the "Origin" field, **Original Proceeding** is selected.

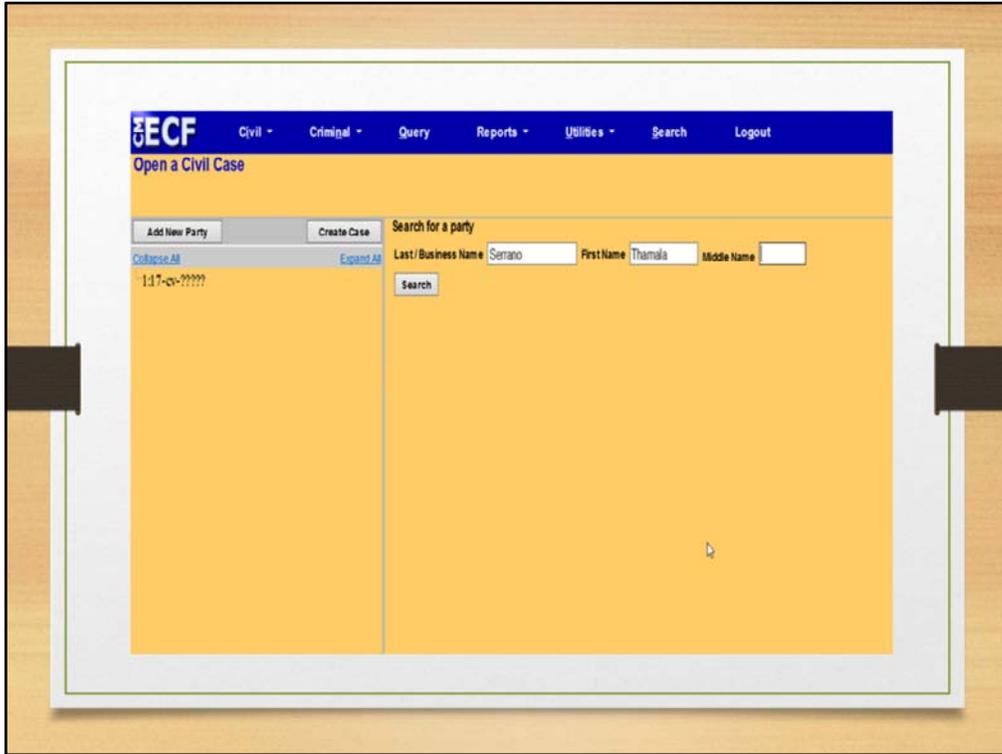
Click next to continue.



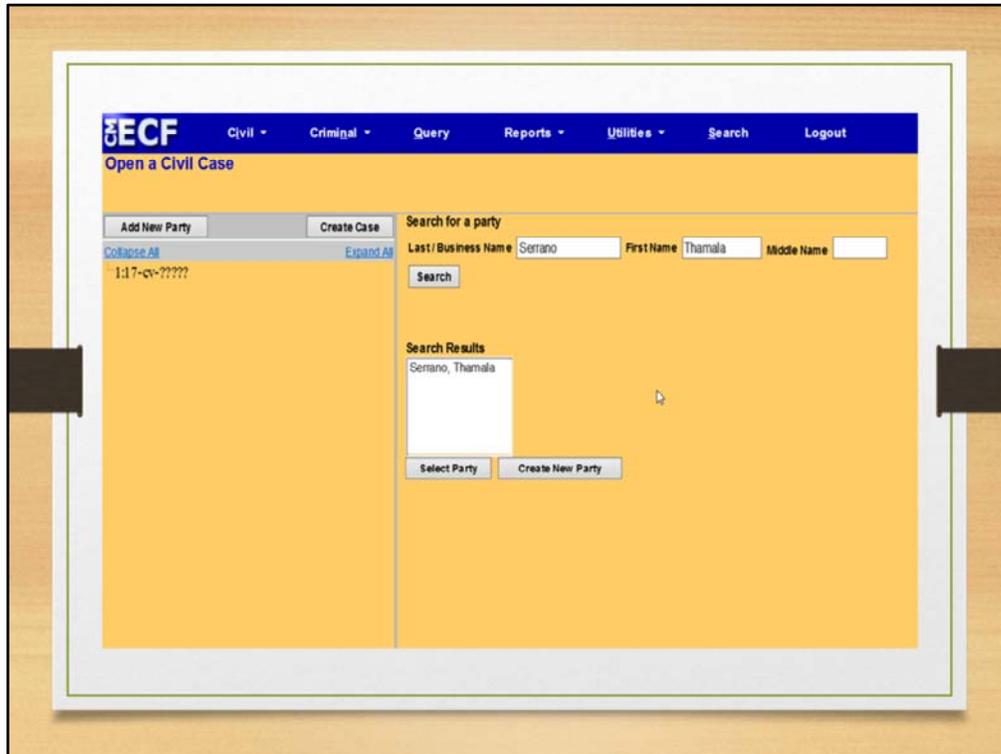
Add Plaintiff

The Search for a party screen displays. Notice the screen is divided into two sections. The left pane is the new user interface and displays the case participant tree and partial case number.

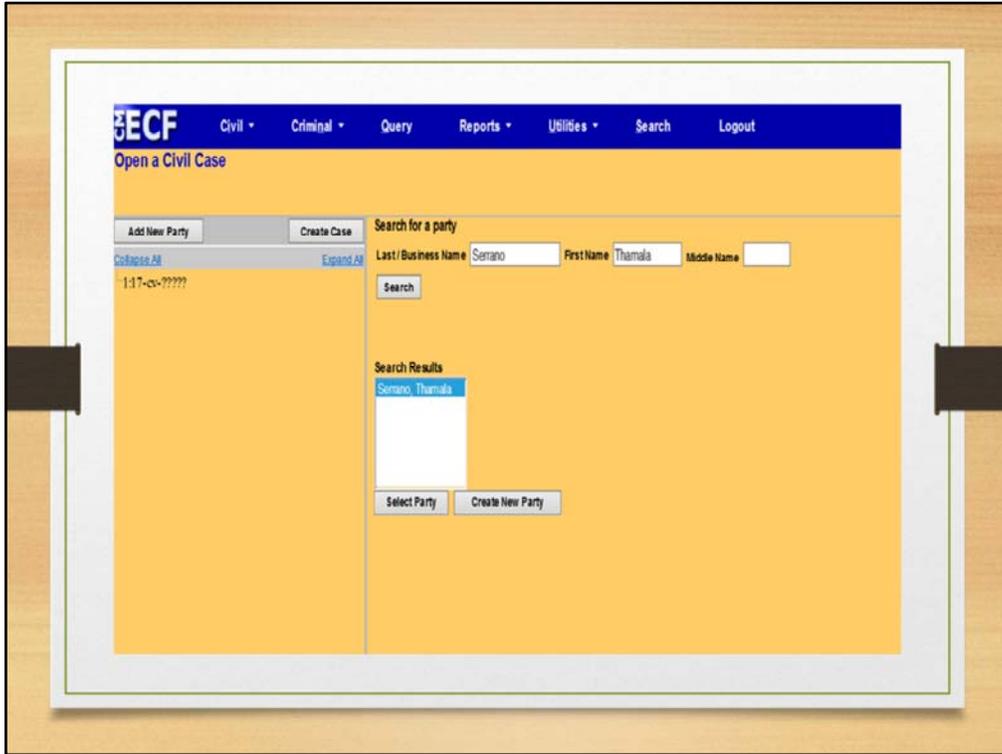
The right pane displays the search for a party function. The party search function is begun by entering the desired party search criteria in the appropriate field or fields.



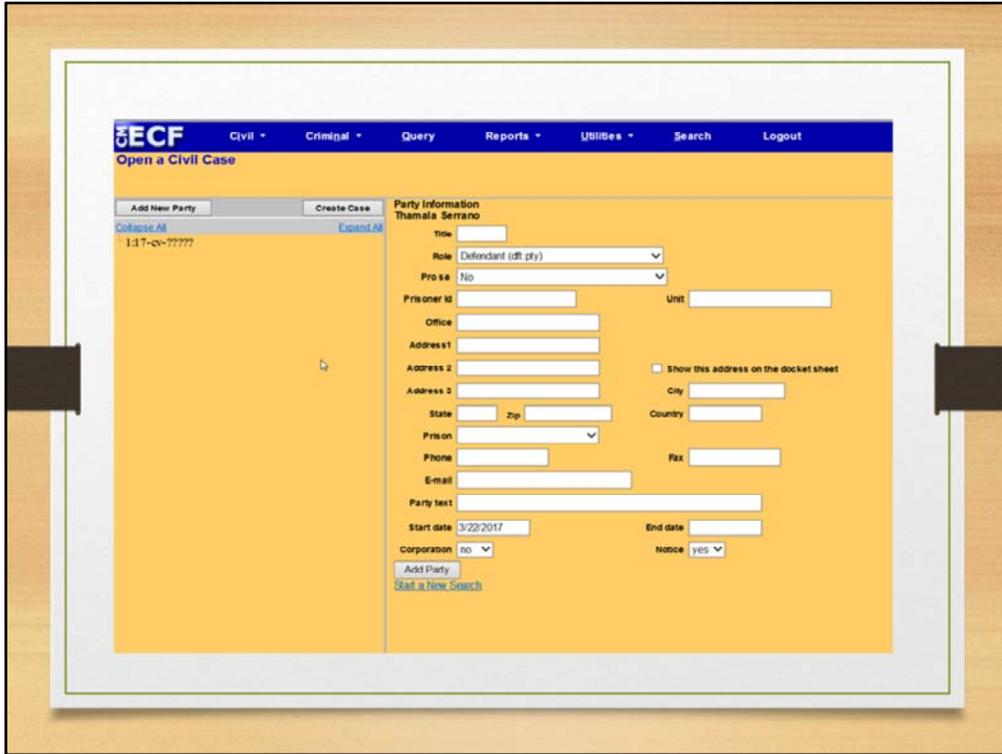
Type the desired name using the name fields. For this example, the name Thamala Serrano is utilized. Proceed to click the Search button.



Users will then either select the party from the Search Results list or click the Create New Party button. Clicking the Create New Party button creates a new party record.



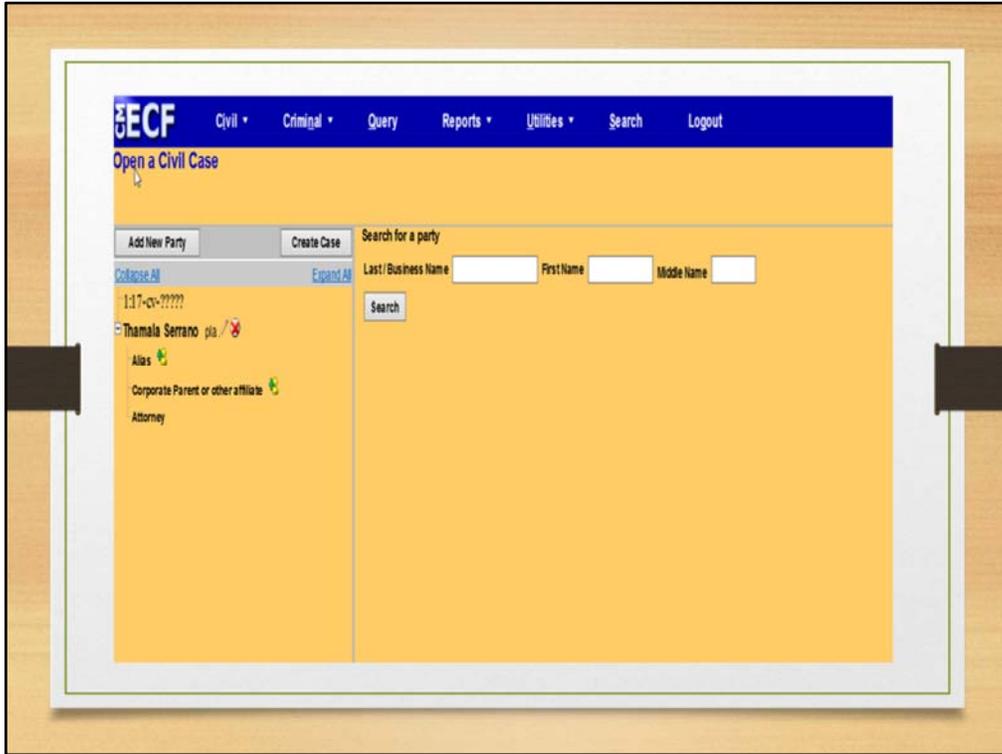
For this demonstration, there is an existing party record for Thamala Serrano.



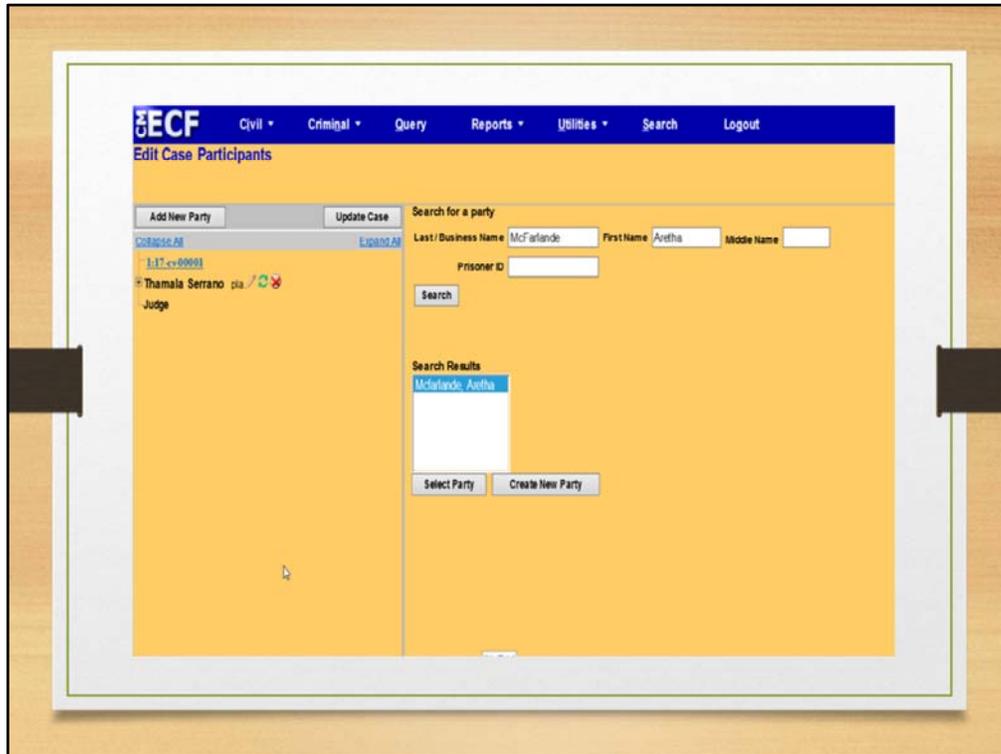
The role type defaults to **defendant**.

The screenshot shows the 'Open a Civil Case' interface in the ECF system. The form is titled 'Open a Civil Case' and includes a navigation bar with 'Civil', 'Criminal', 'Query', 'Reports', 'Utilities', 'Search', and 'Logout'. The main form area is yellow and contains a 'Party Information' section for 'Thamala Serrano'. The 'Role' field is set to 'Plaintiff (party)'. Other fields include 'Pro se' (No), 'Prisoner Id', 'Unit', 'Office', 'Address 1', 'Address 2', 'Address 3', 'State', 'Zip', 'City', 'Country', 'Prison', 'Phone', 'Fax', 'E-mail', 'Party text', 'Start date' (3/22/2017), 'End date', 'Corporation' (no), and 'Notice' (yes). There are buttons for 'Add New Party', 'Create Case', 'Add Party', and 'Start a New Search'.

To change the role type to Plaintiff, the drop-down arrow to the right of the Role field is clicked and Plaintiff is selected. Enter or update address information and complete all applicable fields. Once completed, click "Add Party" to proceed.



You have successfully added a plaintiff.



To add defendant:
Click on **Add New Party**. Search for a party. The name Aretha McFarlande is used for this selection. **Select party**.

Edit Case Participants

Add New Party Update Case

[Collapse All](#) [Expand All](#)

1:17-cv-00001

Thamala Serrano pla /

Judge

Party Information
Aretha McFarlane

Title

Role

Pro se

Prisoner Id Unit

Office

Address 1

Address 2 Show this address on the docket sheet

Address 3 City

State Zip Country

Prison

Phone Fax

E-mail

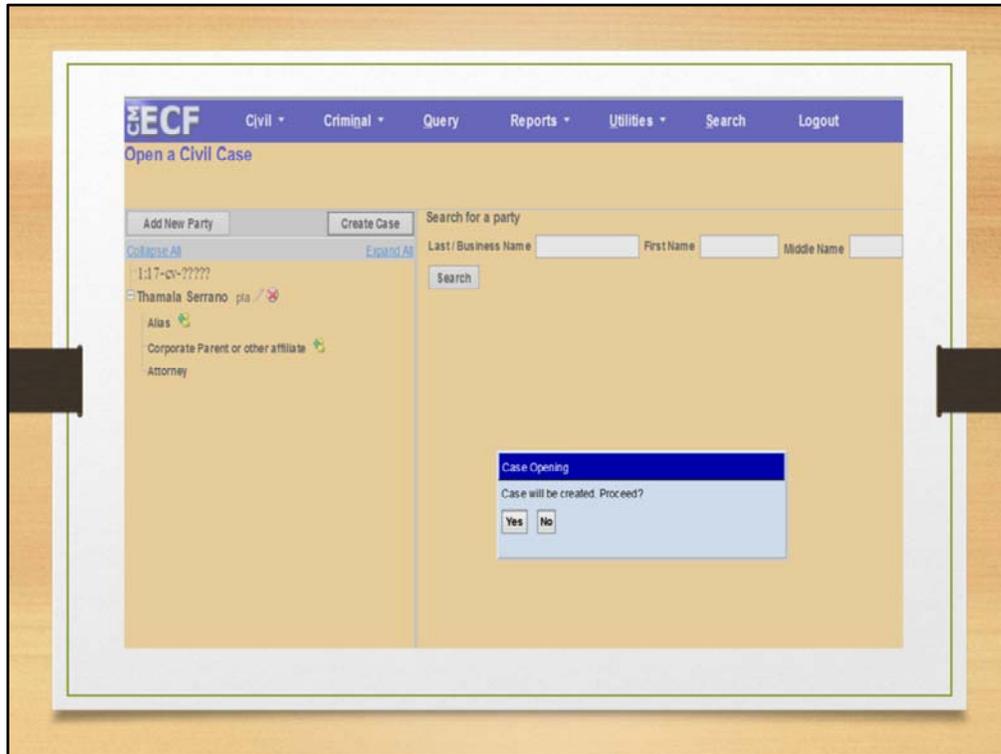
Party text

Start date End date

Corporation Notice

[Start a New Search](#)

Note the role type of **Defendant**. Complete all applicable fields. When concluded, click on **“Add party”**. Repeat the process to add plaintiffs or defendants to your case.



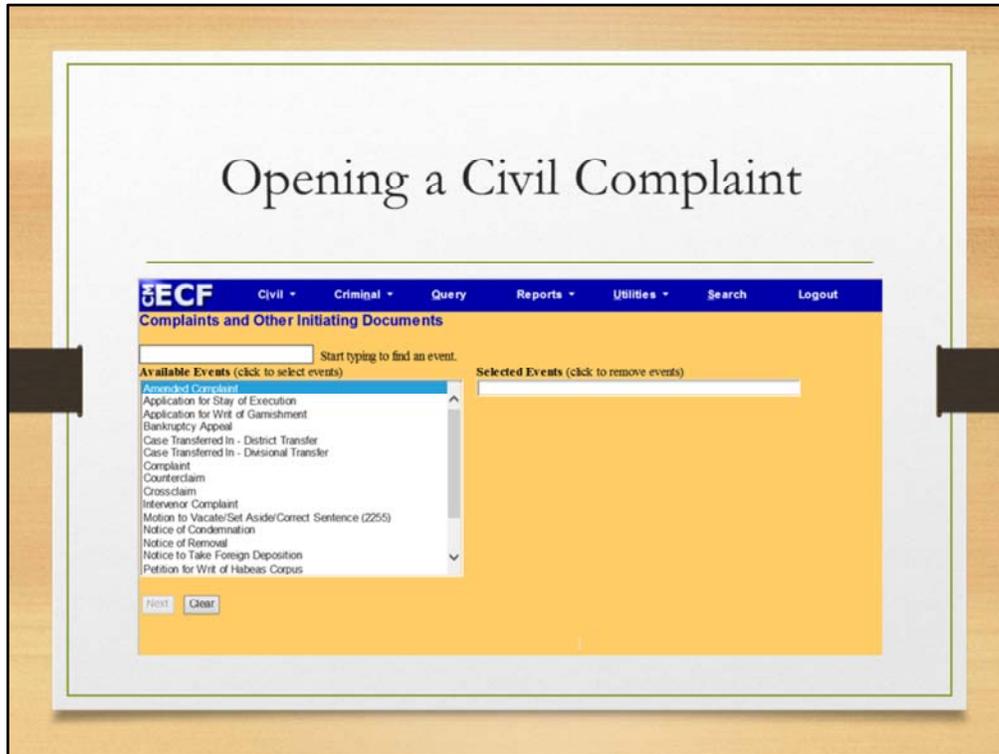
Once all parties are added to your case, click “create case”. A confirmation message will pop-up. Select “Yes” to confirm the opening of a new case.



At this point, you can proceed to docket your lead event. Examples of Lead Events include Complaint, Notice of Removal, Counter Claim, Cross Claim, etc.

For this example, we will file a **Complaint**.

Click **“Docket Lead Event”**.

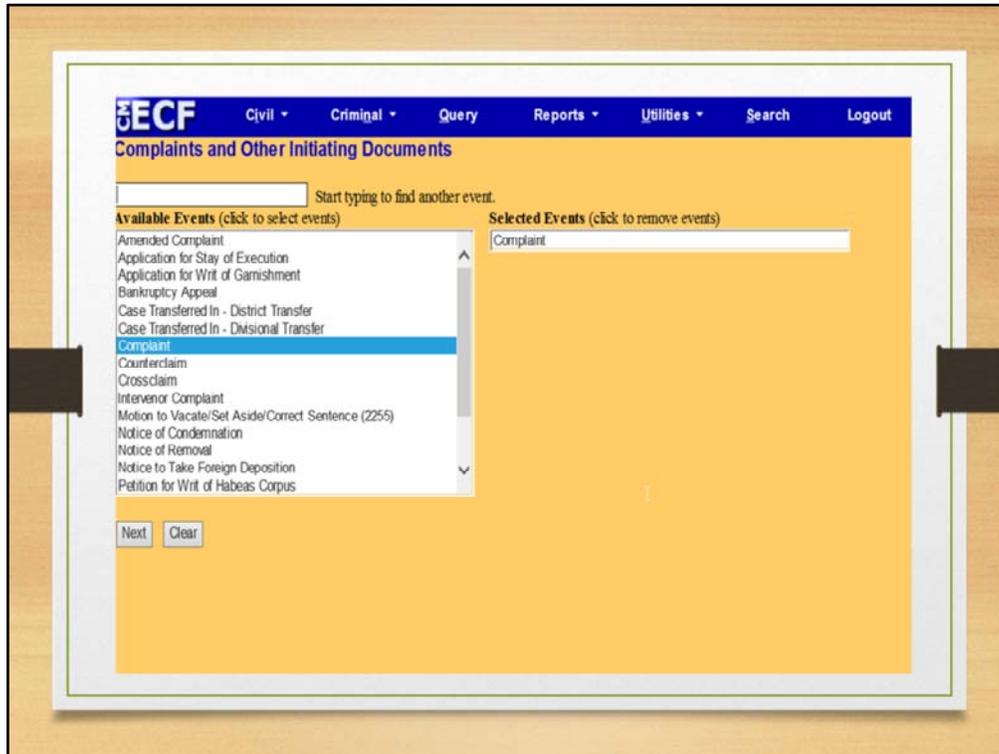


We are now ready to electronically file a complaint.

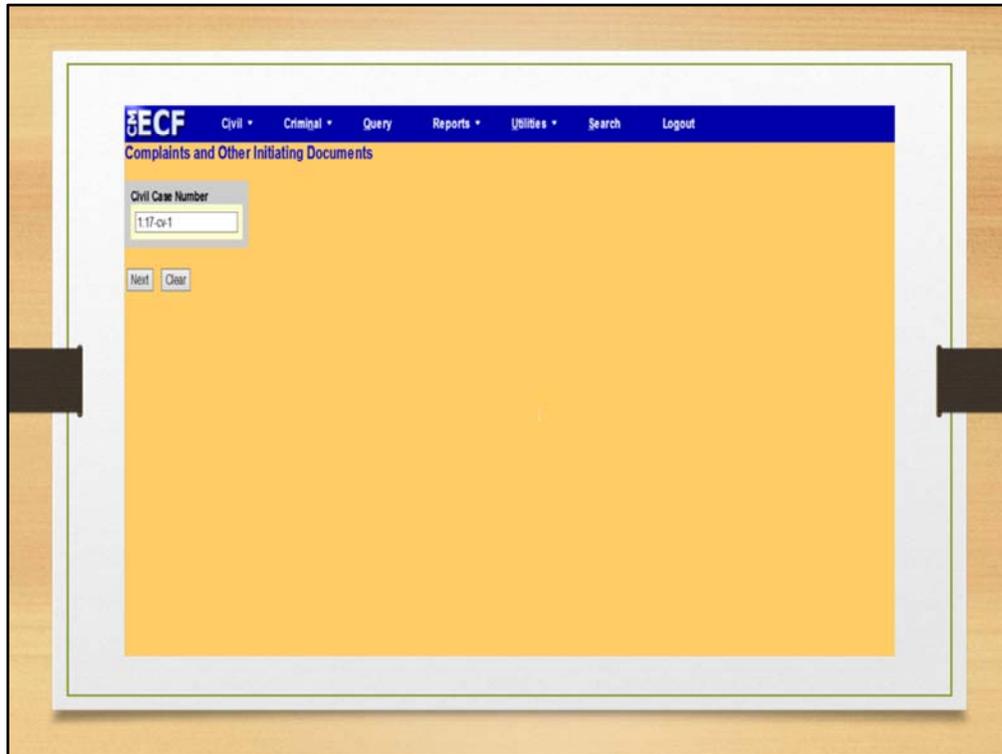
In this example, we continue the process by clicking NEXT on “docket lead event”.

An alternative navigation path is: From the CM/ECF Main Menu screen, select Civil. Click Civil on the horizontal menu. The Civil Events main menu screen appears. This menu presents a list of events that can be electronically filed.

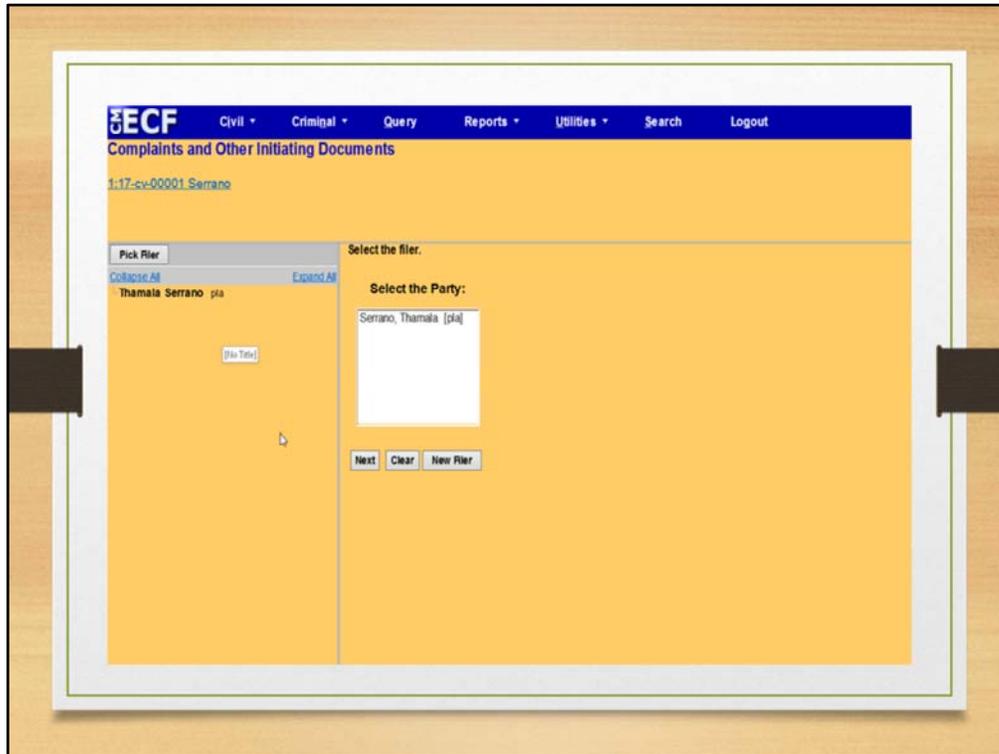
From the pick list, click on Complaints and Other Initiating Documents.



Select **Complaint** from the pick list. You can scroll through the pick list to locate the desired initiating document. Select **Next** to continue.

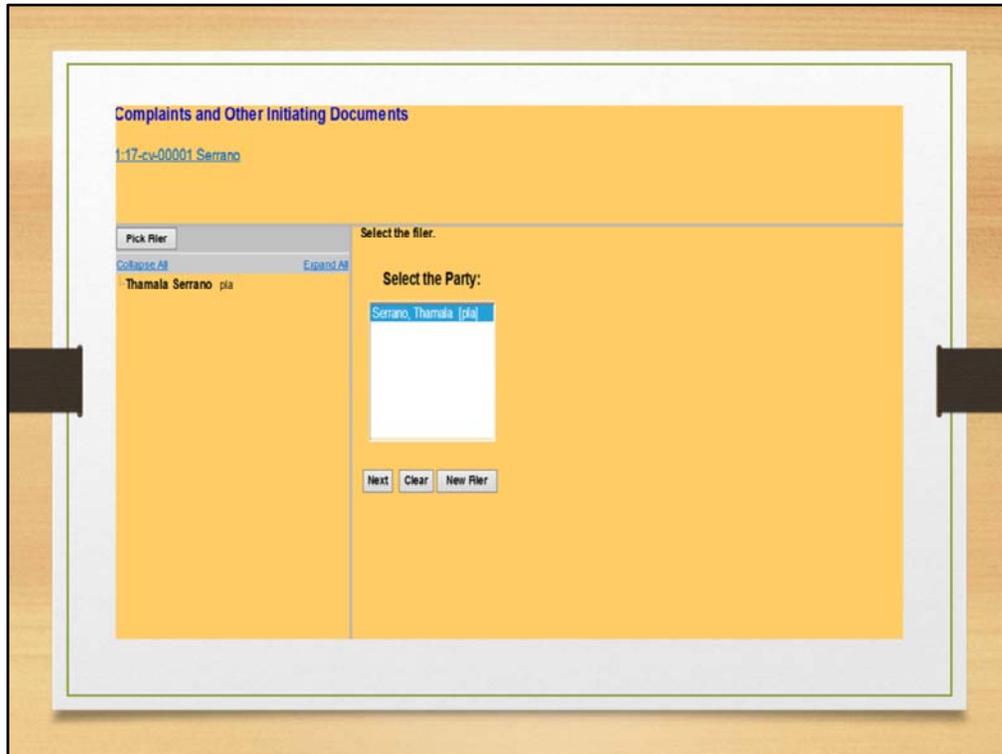


Next you are prompted to the case number in which the complaint is to be filed. Note the format of the case number. **1 represents the St. Croix divisional office. 3 represents the St. Thomas divisional office. 17 is the year (2017); cv is a Civil Case; and 1 represents the case filing number for the year.** Click the Next button to continue.



Once the case has been entered and verified, you are prompted to select the filer of the complaint. Be careful when selecting the party. Parties on the case are listed in alphabetical order, not role type order. Therefore, the plaintiff will not necessarily be at the top of the list.

Notice, the case hyperlink at the top of the page. This link will appear on all subsequent screens and can be used at anytime to view a docket sheet for the case. However, clicking this link will require you to enter your PACER login and password and the applicable PACER fees will be assessed.



Select the party (Plaintiff/Filer of the case) and click **NEXT**.

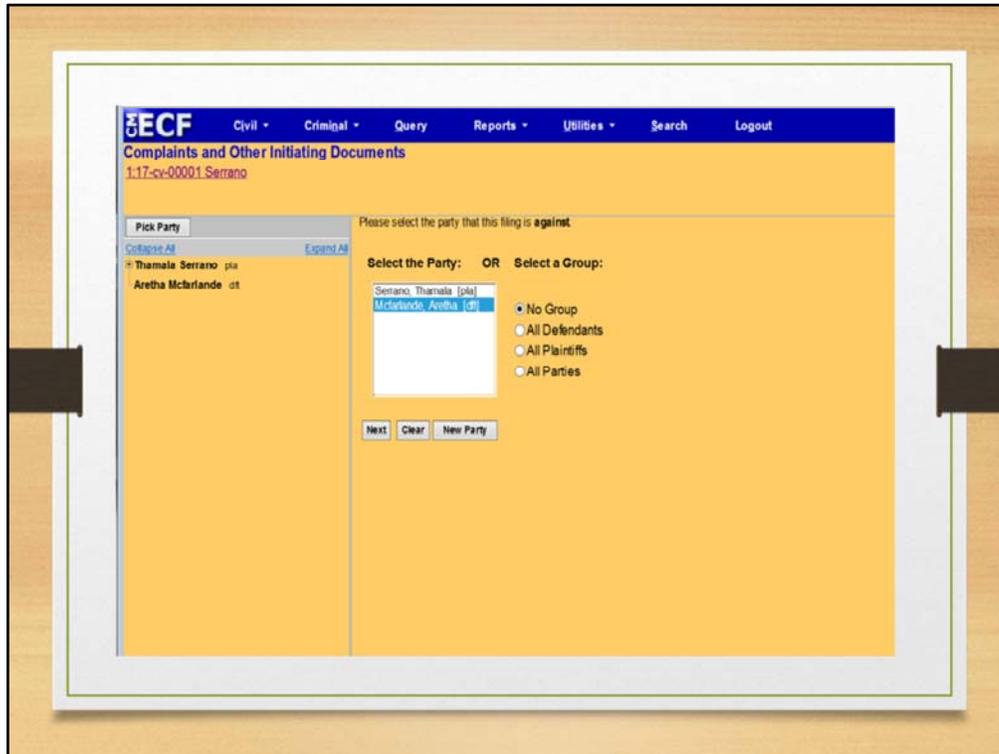


The objective of this step is to determine who will receive notices.

If you are the lead attorney in this case, check the **Lead** box and **Notice**. If you are not the lead attorney, select the **Notice** box to obtain notices of electronic filing in the case.

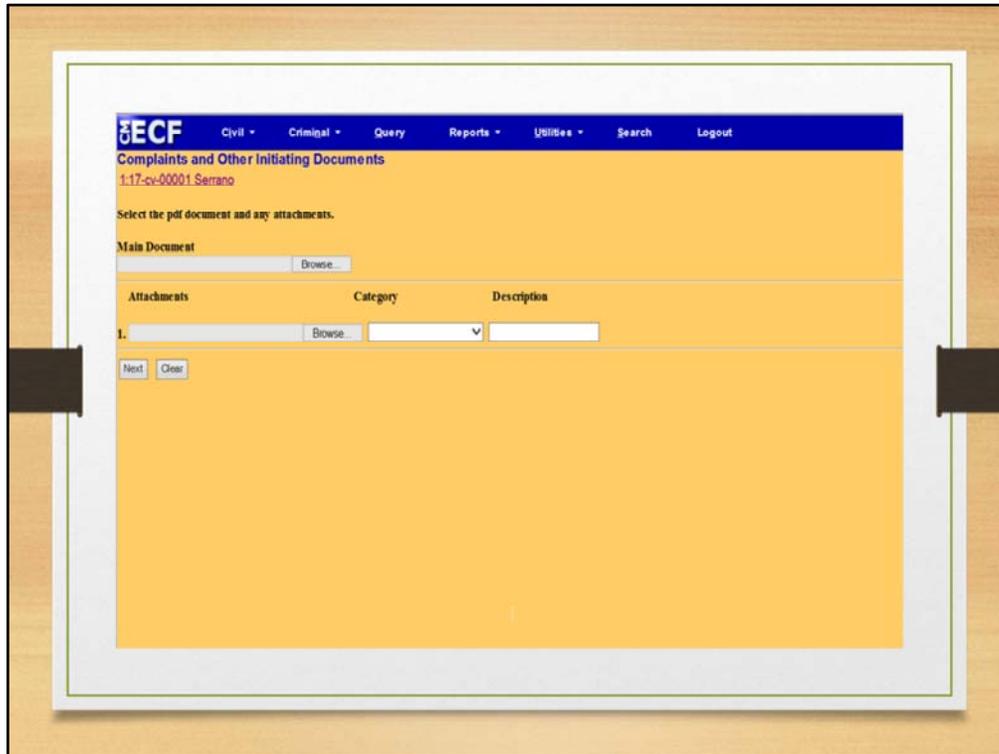
For this example, we will proceed as the Lead Attorney for noticing purposes.

Select **Next** to proceed.



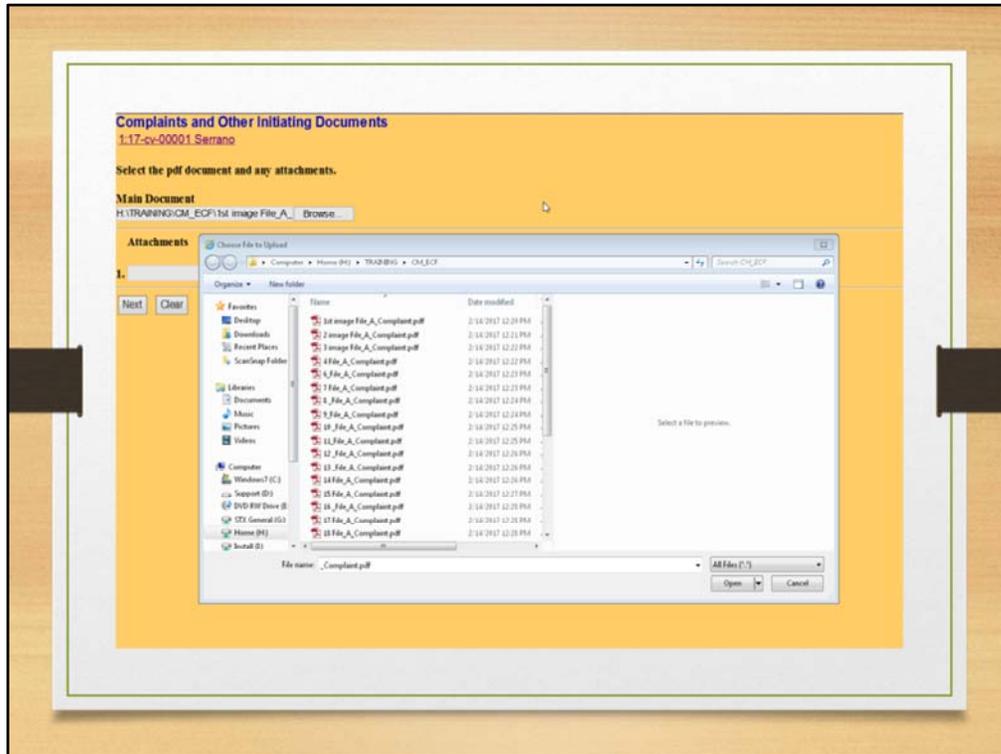
Once the filing party has been selected, you will be prompted to Select the party against whom the complaint is being filed. If the complaint is against multiple parties, each party can be selected individually from the party list or the “All Defendants” radio button at the right of the party list can be selected. If the defendants are selected individually, the final docket text will include the names of each of the defendants selected. If the “all defendants” radio button is selected, the docket text will say “against all defendants” instead of individual party names.

Select the defendant, Aretha McFarlande, then click Next.



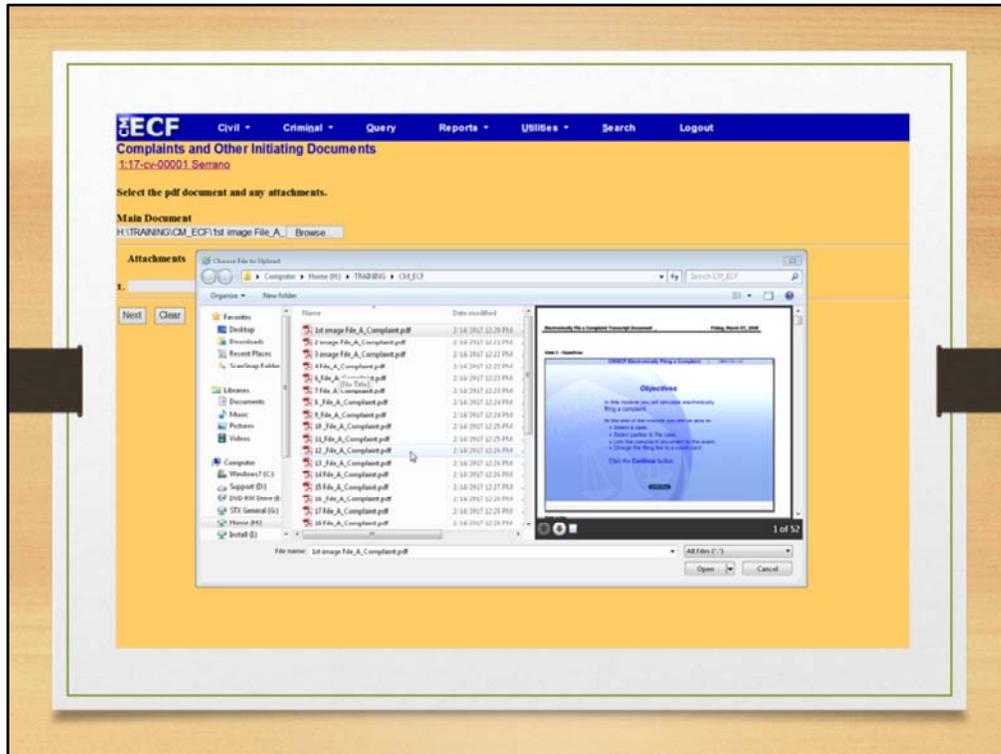
Next you are prompted to associate an electronic version of the complaint with this event. The Filename field must contain the path and filename of the associated document. You may type in the entire path and filename in the “main document” section (if you know it), or use the Browse button to navigate to the file on your computer. For this exercise, we will navigate to the file.

Click the browse button.



If this next screen does not show the document you want to associate with the event, it will be necessary to navigate to the folder on your computer where the document resides. For this example we will assume we are in the correct folder. Remember, any document associated with the event must be in PDF format to be accepted by CM/ECF.

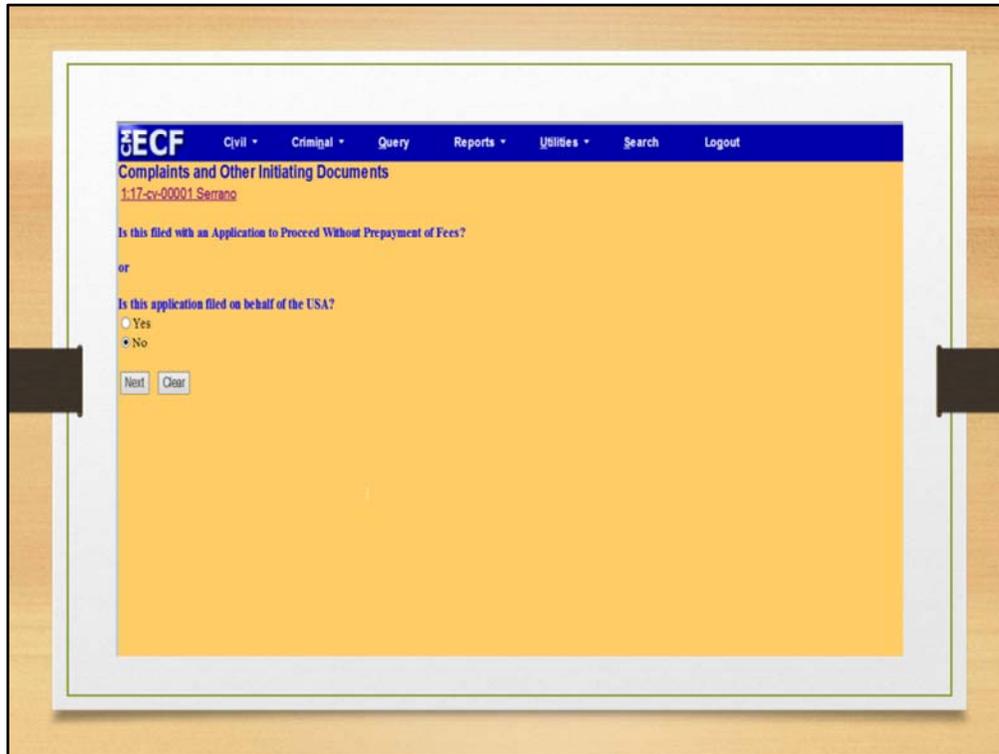
Click to select the Complaint.



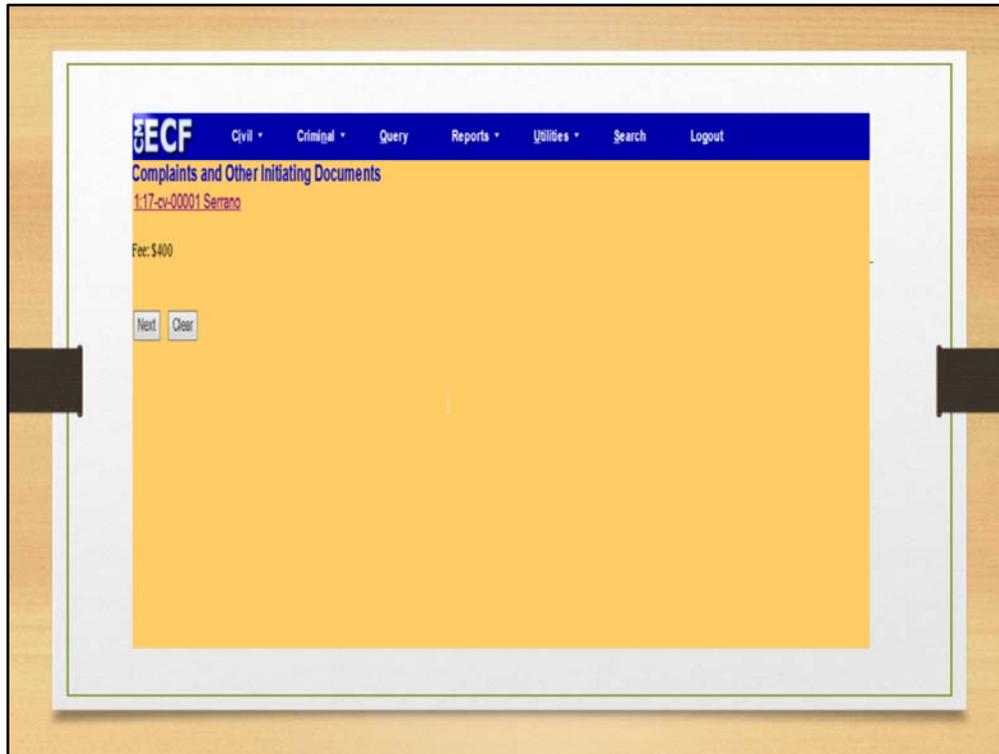
It is always a good idea to view the contents of the selected document to be sure it is the one you really want. At your computer, click on the file you intend to attach. You can view the content of the document on the right side of your screen. From the pop-up menu, click Open to complete the document selection process.

The screenshot shows a web interface for the ECF system. At the top, there is a blue navigation bar with the ECF logo and menu items: Civil, Criminal, Query, Reports, Utilities, Search, and Logout. Below the navigation bar, the page title is "Complaints and Other Initiating Documents". Underneath, there is a link for "1:17-cv-00001 Serrano". The main instruction is "Select the pdf document and any attachments." The "Main Document" section contains a text input field with the value "H:\TRAINING\CM_ECF\1st image File A_" and a "Browse..." button. Below this is an "Attachments" table with columns for "Attachments", "Category", and "Description". The table has one row with a "Browse..." button, a dropdown menu, and an empty text field. At the bottom left of the form area, there are "Next" and "Clear" buttons.

The Filename field is filled in with the path and document filename. You now have an opportunity to add additional supporting documents to the event. If there are other supporting documents to be included with the complaint, click the “Yes” radio button to the right of the “Attachments to Document” prompt to add those documents. For this exercise there are no additional attachments. Now that the main document has been selected, click the Next button to continue.

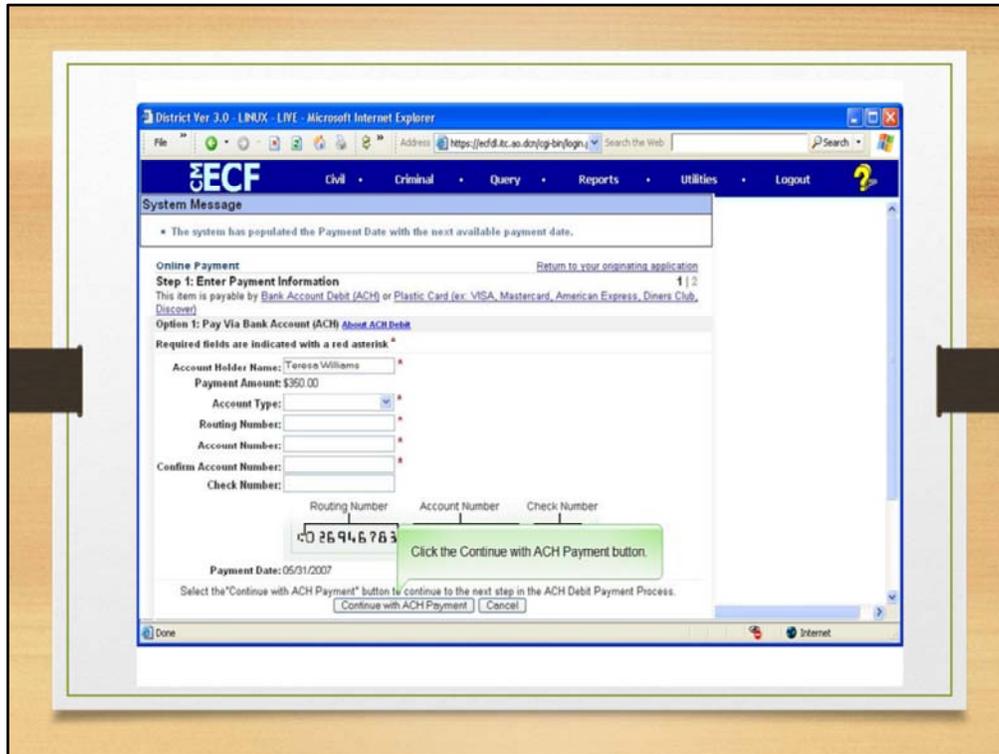


Not all attorneys will need to pay the filing fee via the internet. Therefore, you are asked the question “Is this filing with an Application to Proceed Without Prepayment of Fees Y/N?”. If you answer “Y” to this prompt, it is assumed this is an IFP filing or that you are filing on behalf of the USA, and all payment information will be skipped. For this exercise, we have selected the “no” radio button. Click the Next button to proceed.

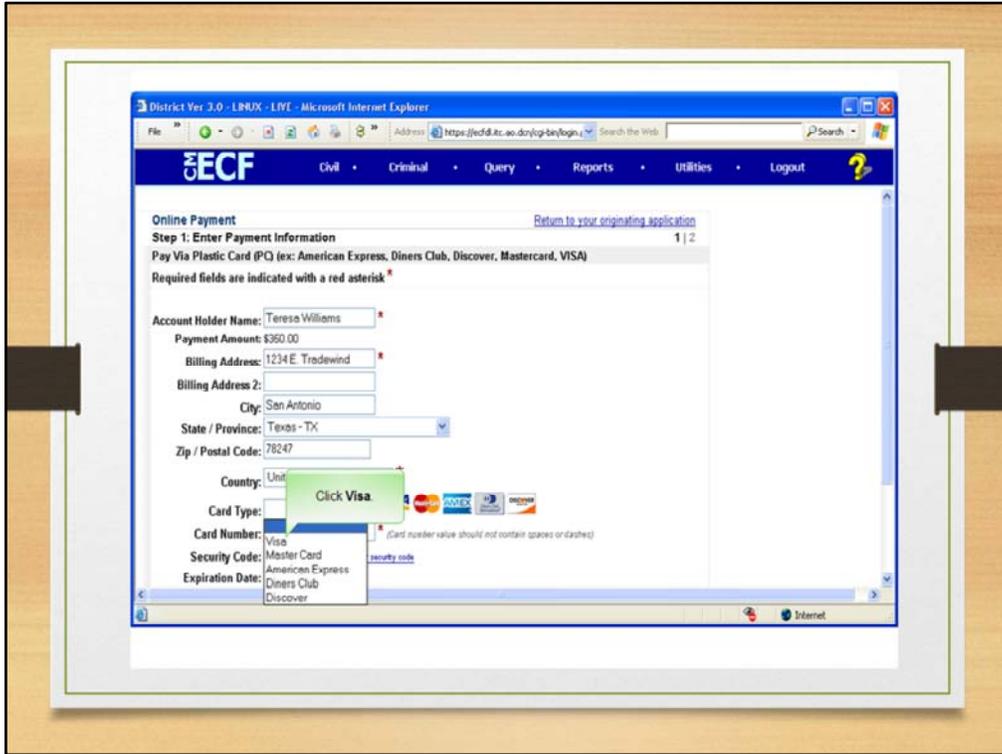


The application will display the default amount for the filing fee. This is the amount that will be charged to your credit card at the completion of this event. The amount cannot be modified. If you believe the amount to be incorrect, cancel the event by clicking on any main menu option and contact the court. For this exercise, we will accept the \$400.00 fee by clicking the Next button to continue.

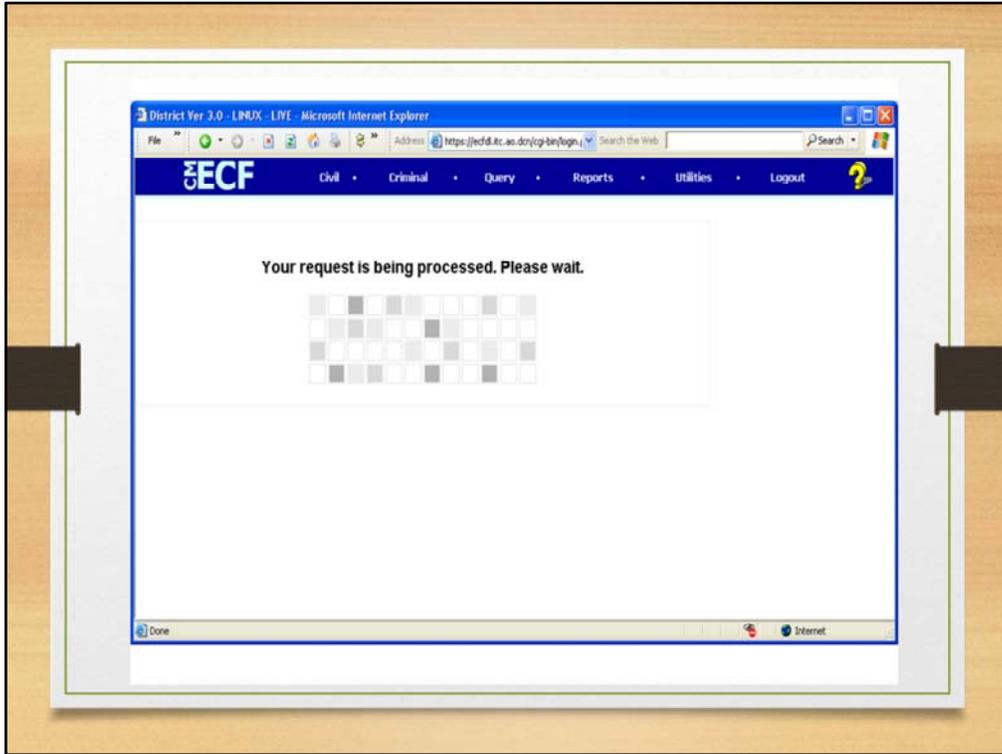
Once the filing fee amount has been accepted, a message will be displayed indicating the payment processing screen is being loaded. At this point, you will be redirected from CM/ECF to the Pay.gov Internet site for entry and approval of the charge of the filing fee to your credit card.



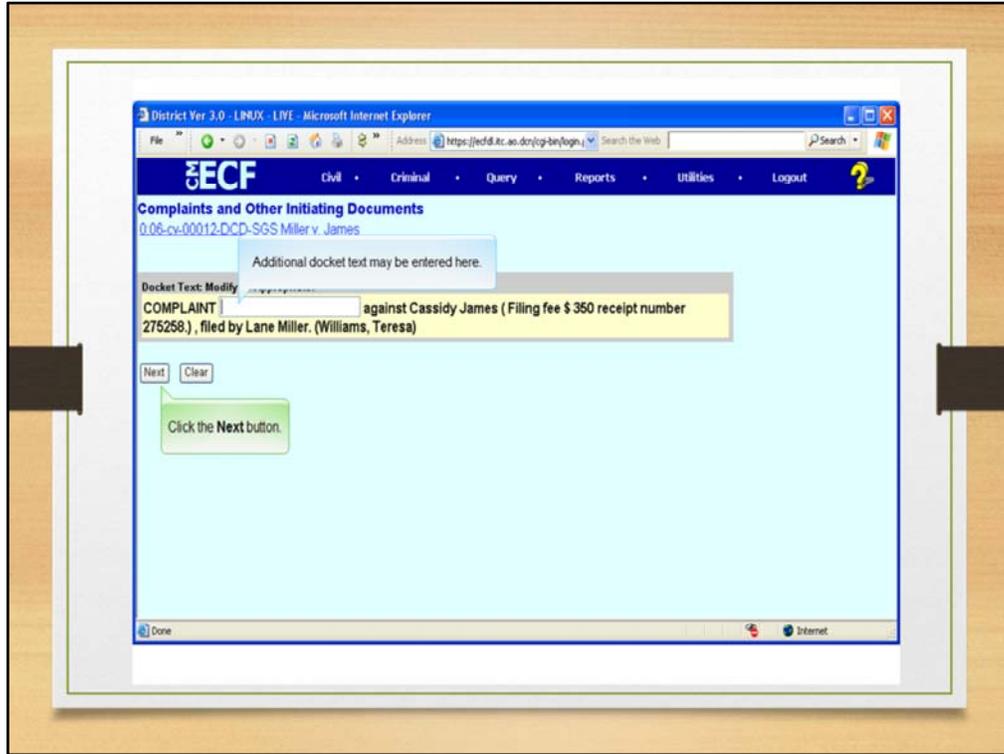
The next screen to appear is the payment information screen, which offers two different payment options. The filing fee may be paid as an DirectDebit (ACH), which will automatically deduct the payment amount from the designated checking or savings account, or by charging the filing fee to a credit card. If the payment is to be made as a Direct Debit, the routing information can be obtained from a copy of a deposit slip for the designated account. In this exercise, we will simulate charging the fee to a credit card. Click the Continue with ACH Payment button, to proceed.



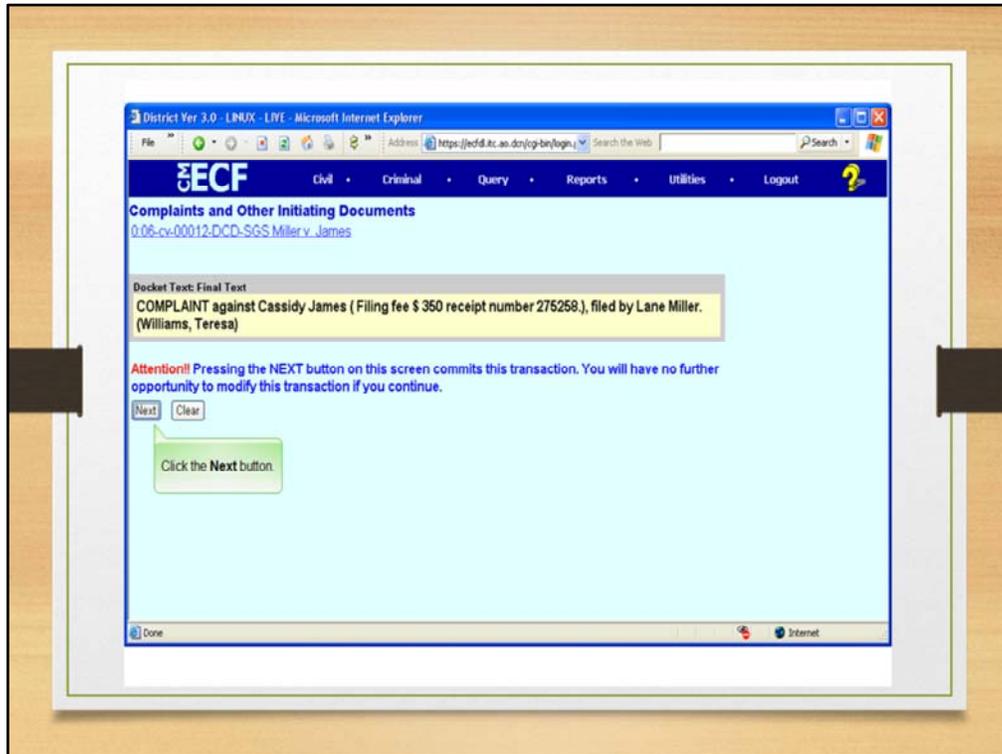
From the pull-down list, click Visa.



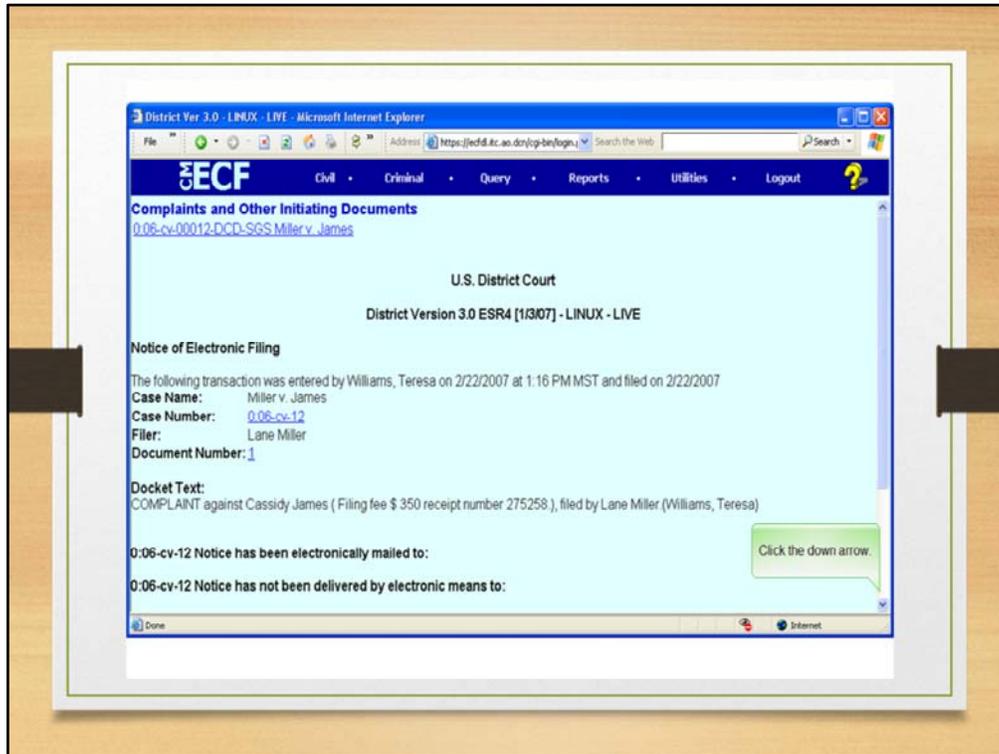
Your request is being processed. Please wait.



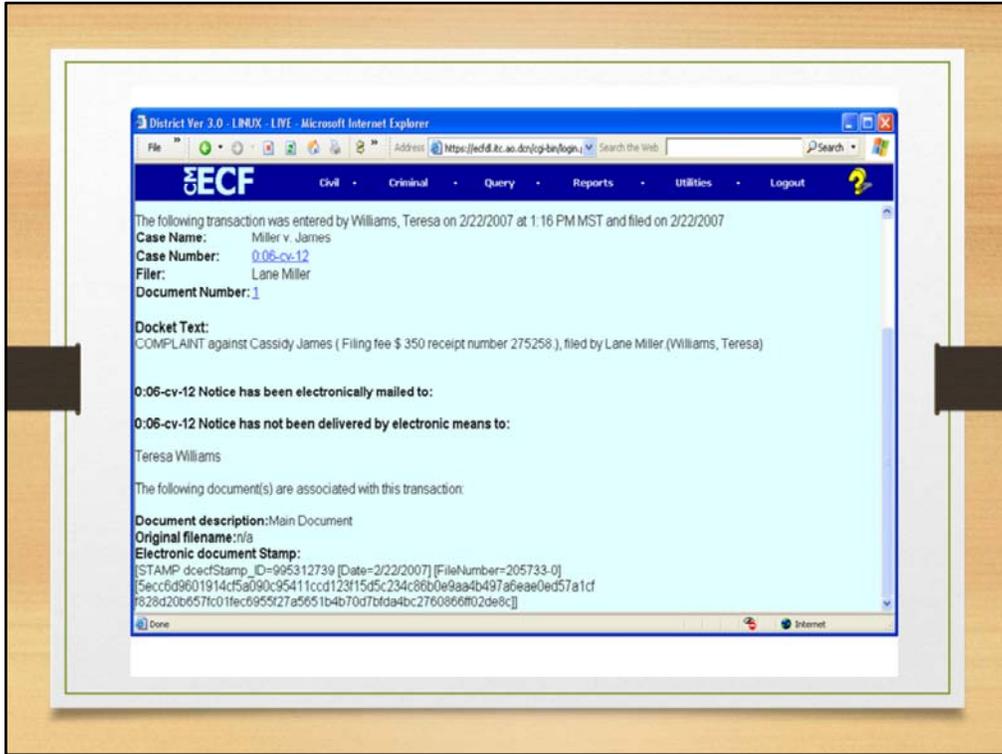
Click the **Next** button.



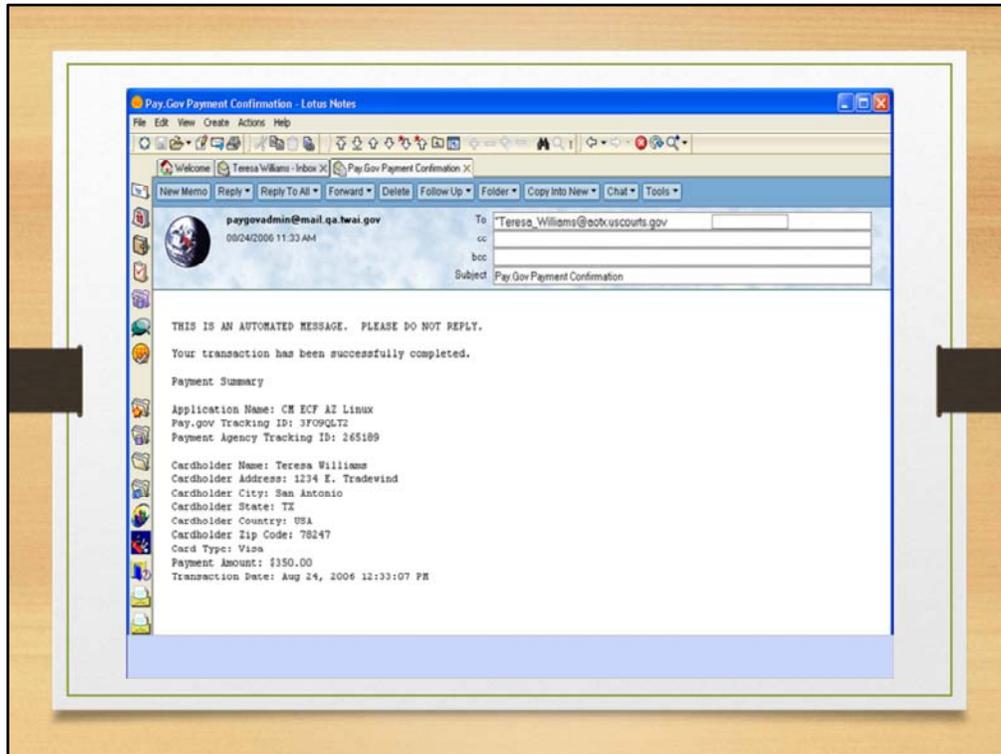
Click the **Next** button.



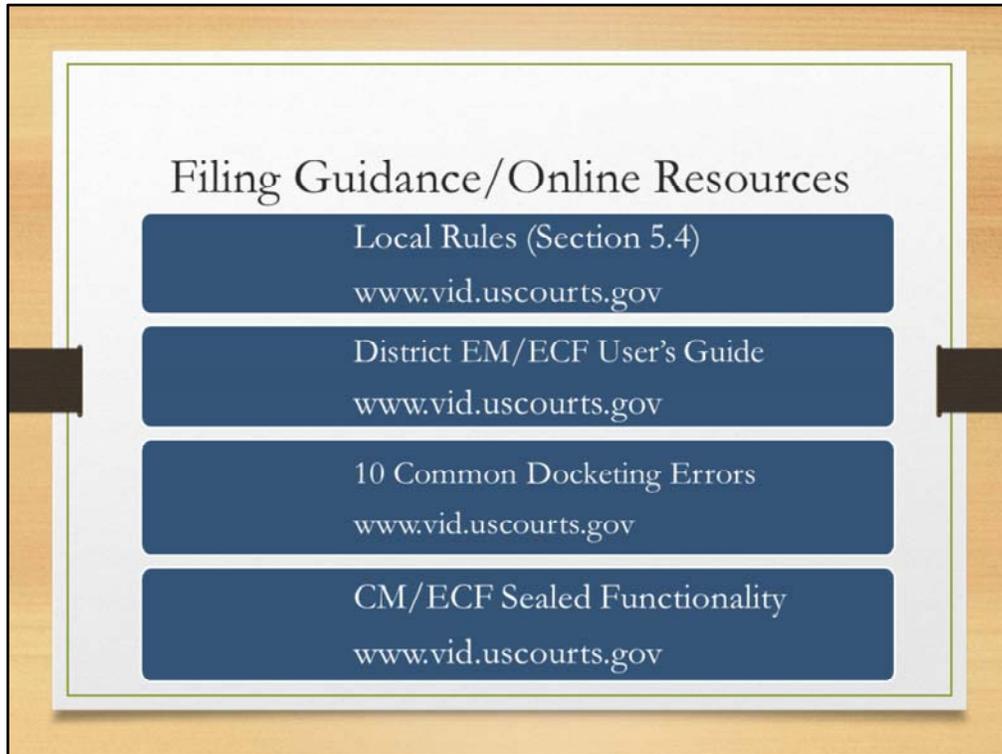
Your document has now been filed. A **Notice of Electronic Filing** is obtained with pertinent case information.



Please note the Electronic Document Stamp information.



Payment confirmation will be emailed from Pay.gov regarding your finalized transaction. You have now successfully opened a Civil Case and filed an initiating document; Complaint.



Navigation path to online resources: Type "District Court of the Virgin Islands" in your browser, click on "For Attorneys" and Click on "Filing Guidance" to obtain resources outlined above.

Attorney Training Database Login/Password Access

- Login: **Trainer1**
- Password: **Attytrainer1**
- Login: **Trainer2**
- Password: **Attytrainer2**
- Login: **Trainer3**
- Password: **Attytrainer3**
- Login: **Trainer4**
- Password: **Attytrainer4**

Questions?

