

**U.S. Bankruptcy Court
for the District of Oregon**

**Style Guide
for Electronically Filing Case Documents**



September, 2004

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I. Introduction

This guide contains the style practices for court personnel and the preferred practices for all users of the ECF application in the District of Oregon. The intention of the guide is to make everyone's task easier, whether they are entering data or querying the ECF database. The application of a common set of styles when entering information 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 ECF, since successful queries often require very exact matches on search data including punctuation, and abbreviations.

II. Adding Parties

Much of case opening in 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.

BEFORE adding any party to the case, search the ECF database for the party. See the Searching for Parties section of this Style Guide.

When adding new parties to the ECF database, the names should conform with the standard conventions listed in the Style Conventions for Names section of this Style Guide.

A. Adding Debtors:

Add debtors to cases using names and addresses exactly as they appear on the petition or complaint including any alias names associated with the party.

In most cases, debtors or joint debtors will not be found when searching the ECF database. The debtor and joint debtor will need to be added to the database and the case as a new party. If the debtor and/or joint debtor have filed previously, and are in the database, verify the address information. If the address is not an exact match, add the debtors or joint debtors as a new party.

ONLY IF the SSN for an individual debtor or the Tax ID for a business DOES NOT EXIST is it permissible to enter zeros in the applicable box, enter zeros in the format below. Do NOT enter zeros in the box that does not apply.

SSN: 000-00-0000

Tax ID: 00-0000000

B. Adding Plaintiffs and Defendants:

Add plaintiffs and defendants to cases using names exactly as they appear on the complaint. When searching for the plaintiffs and defendants, if the plaintiff or defendant are found, use the information in the database.

Do NOT add addresses for plaintiff(s) if represented by counsel.

DO enter the address for defendant(s) and the address of any known attorney for the defendant(s).

ALWAYS change the party type role to plaintiff or defendant.

C. Adding Creditors:

Add creditors to cases using names already in the ECF database if at all possible.

Creditors (such as Ford Motor Credit Corporation) are added to many different cases. Ideally, there should be only one Ford Motor Credit Corporation party in the ECF database. This greatly simplifies searching when adding parties and querying cases. The court has developed standard abbreviations and acronyms for entering creditors. See the **Abbreviations and Acronyms** section of this Style Guide

For instance, it is better to add Ford Motor Credit Corporation as FMCC in all cases even if that is not the exact name used on a document being filed . The idea is to avoid adding name variations for a single creditor. For example:

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

The proliferation of different names for the same creditor makes searching frustrating, time consuming, and may provide a “false negative” result.

ALWAYS change the Party type role to Creditor!

D. Adding Attorneys:

DO NOT add an attorney IF there is NOT an EXACT MATCH after performing a search.

Call the Help Desk to advise the attorney does not appear to be in the Attorney Database or address/phone number does not match.

III. Searching for Parties

Before adding any party to a case, search for that party using appropriate “search clues”. If the system finds the correct name, select it to help eliminate different versions of the same party name being added to the ECF database.

Even something as simple as “United States” can cause ambiguity if it is entered in different variations. For instance, following this Style Guide can help avoid “United States” being entered in the database as “UNITED STATES”, “U.S.”, “USA”, or “U.S. of A.”

Search Clues:

- Enter one field of data for each search.
- Try alternate search clues if your first search is not successful.
- The ECF database responds faster when using SSN, TIN or Bar ID fields to search.
- Enter SSNs and TINs with hyphens.
- Searching is not case sensitive (e.g., enter mcfly to find McFly).
- Partial names can be entered.
- To expand the search results, enter less information (e.g., Mc to find McFly and McDonald) but do not enter less than two consecutive characters.
- To limit the search, enter more information.
- NEVER** use the asterisk by itself in a search.
- Do NOT** use an asterisk (*) or star at the end of search strings.
- An asterisk may be used before or within search strings (e.g. *son, Bens*n)

IV. Style Conventions

The following style conventions apply to all names and addresses entered in the ECF application.

A. General Rules:

- Do NOT** use the ampersand (&) symbol anywhere in ECF. Use the word “and” in its place.
- Do NOT** use other punctuation UNLESS entering Debtor(s), Plaintiff(s) or Defendant(s).
- Do NOT** enter account numbers.
- DO** select the correct Party Type Role (e.g. Debtor, Plaintiff, Creditor, etc.) when adding parties.
- DO** create a new party record any time a search does not produce an exact name/address match.
- USE** upper and lower case characters for all names **AND** capitalize the first letter in a proper noun.

B. Specific Rules Re: Names:

- Enter Debtor(s), Plaintiff, and Defendant names EXACTLY as they appear on the petition/complaint, including punctuation. This includes all alias names associated with the party.
- Debtor and Joint Debtor are not gender-related titles. The Debtor is listed on the left of the petition and the Joint Debtor is listed on the right of the petition.
- Enter **only** up to 40 characters in the last name field for a party. Abbreviate when necessary to keep within the 40 character limit. See **Abbreviations and Acronyms** below for mandatory and suggested abbreviations. If the last name does not fit within the 40 character limit, abbreviate as best you can and then also enter the entire name as the FIRST aka record.
- Include phrases such as “An Oregon Corporation” or “An Oregon Limited Liability Company” in the last name field ONLY if the entire last name field will

be fewer than 40 characters. If the last name field will be more than 40 characters, enter the above phrases in the Party Text field.

- ONLY** Use designation **aka** for all alias names, including business names.
- Enter each single name alias in the last name field, even if it appears to be a first name (e.g. Frank; Shelley).
- ONLY** enter business names in the last name field.
- If initials are used for the first name and there are no spaces or periods between the letters, enter both initials in the first name field. If there are spaces or periods between the letters, enter as first and middle names (e.g. if MC Hammer, enter MC in the first name field. If M.C. Hammer, enter M. in the first name field and C. in the middle name field.).
- Enter names that have upper and lower case letters or hyphens without spaces (e.g. Patricia DeLaGarza; Mary Smith-Baker).
- If a party has double last names or multiple middle names, enter the first name only in the first name field, the last name only in the last name field, and all the other names in the middle name field. If the name does not fit in the middle name field, enter the first name only in the first name field, the last name only in the last name field, leave the middle name field blank and enter the entire name in the last name field as an aka record. When utilizing the aka field for this purpose, the data must be entered in the FIRST available aka field.

Example: Robert Kramer Johns Martin

Last Name:	Martin
Middle Name:	Kramer Johns
First Name:	Robert

- If a party does not have a middle name, leave the middle name field blank. **Do NOT** enter the letters “NMI”.
- If **“The”** is part of an entity name, **Do NOT** enter it if it is the first word.
- If **“of”** is part of an entity name, enter it in lower case (e.g. Bank of America).
- Do NOT** use digits in names unless part of official name.

- Use the approved abbreviation/acronym for federal and state agencies if there is one. See the **Abbreviations and Acronyms** section of this Style Guide for a list of agencies who frequently file documents.
- Federal Agencies** - if there is not an acronym listed, use *US Name of Agency* (e.g. US Dept of Interior).
- State Agencies** - if there is not an acronym listed, use *state abbreviation* and *Name of Department* (e.g. WA Dept of Employment).

C. Specific Rules Re: Addresses:

- Addresses must **NOT** exceed four (4) lines, maximum of 40 characters per line. The party name and address must **NOT** exceed five (5) lines.
- The city, state and zip must be the **ONLY** information on the last address line. Use the full nine digit zip code if at all possible.
- Foreign addresses must have the full name of the post office and country of destination printed in capital letters.
- The country name or APO destination must be the **ONLY** information on the bottom line of the address.

Alfonso Diaz
Rio de Danubec y Rio Florido
CD.JUAREZ CHIHUAHUA
MEXICO #1050

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

- Use *c/o* to indicate "In Care Of".
- The preferred format for telephone and fax numbers is (541) 465-6448.

V. Abbreviations

A. States and Territories:

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

B. Abbreviations and Acronyms:**Mandatory:**

Account	Acct
Account Collection Bureau Inc	ACBI
Administration	Adm
Adult & Family Services Div	AFSD
American Telephone & Telegraph	AT and T
Associates/Associated	Assoc
Association	Assn
Bankruptcy	Bkey
(in) care of	c/o
Commission	Comm
Company	Co
Corporation	Corp
County	Cty
Court	Ct
Credit Union	CU
Center	Ctr
Department	Dept
Department of Motor Vehicles	DMV
Dept of Revenue (Oregon)	ODR
Dept of Veterans' Affairs (Oregon)	ODVA
District	Dist
Division	Div
Division of Child Support	DCS (Formerly SED)
Doctor	Dr
Emerald People's Utility Board	EPUD
Eugene Water & Electric Board	EWEB
Federal	Fed
Federal Deposit Insurance Corp	FDIC
Federal Housing Authority	FHA
Federal Savings & Loan Ins. Corp	FSLIC
Ford Motor Credit Co.	FMCC
General Electric Capital Corp	GE Capital Corp

General Electric Credit Corp	GECC
General Motors Acceptance Corp	GMAC
Higher Education Assist. Foundation	HEAF
Hospital	Hosp
Housing & Urban Development	HUD
Incorporated	Inc
Industries	Ind
Insurance	Ins
Internal Revenue Service	IRS
International	Intl
J. C. Penney	JCPenney
Justice Dept , Division of Child Support	DCS (Formerly SED)
Lane Community College	LCC
Limited	Ltd
Manufacturer's Hanover Trust Co	Mfrs Hanover Trust Co
Manufacturing	Mfg
Management	Mgmt
Mortgage	Mrtg
National	Natl
Nissan Motor Acceptance Co.	NMAC
Oregon Health Sciences University	OHSU
Oregon State Justice Department	
Division of Child Support	DCS (Formerly SED)
Oregon Department of Revenue	ODR
Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs	ODVA
Oregon Medical Group	OMG
Oregon Medical Lab	OML
Oregon State Scholarship Commission	OSSC
Oregon State University	OSU
Physicians Med Lab	PML
Portland General Electric	PGE
Products	Prod
Professional	Prof
Public Utility Commission	PUC

Sacred Heart Medical Center	SHMC
Saint	St
Savings & Loan	S and L
Sears & Co	Sears
Securities & Exchange Commission	SEC
Service(s)	Svc
Small Business Administration	SBA
Springfield Utility Board	SUB
State Accident Insurance Fund	SAIF
Toyota Motor Credit Corp	TMCC
University of Oregon	UO
United States	US
Women's Care Associates	WCA

Suggested:

Apartment	#
Attorney	Aty
Avenue	Ave
Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway	Bvtn-Hlsdl Hwy
Building	Bldg
Boulevard	Blvd
Circle	Cir
Creek	Crk
Drive	Dr
Ferry	Fry
Floor	Fl
Freeway	Fwy
General Delivery	Gen Del
Highway	Hwy
Junction	Jct

Lane	Ln
Loop	Either Lp or Loop
Mount	Mt
Mountain	Mtn
Number	#
Parkway	Pky
Park	Either Pk or Park
Partnership	Ptnrshp
Place	Pl
Point	Pt
Postal Mail Box	PMB
Post Office Box	POB
President	Pres
Road	Rd
Room	#
Route or Rural Route	Rt or RRt
Secretary	Sec
Shareholder	Shrhldr
Sole Proprietor/Proprietorship	Sole Prop or Sole Prprtr
Space	#
Square	Sq
Stockholder	Stckhldr
Street	St
Suite	#
Terrace	Ter
Treasurer	Tres
Turnpike	Tpke