

United States Bankruptcy Court
Eastern District of California

Bankruptcy WebPACER Information Guide

1. Introduction

The Bankruptcy Court's Public Access to Court Electronic Records System (e-Cal WebPACER) permits registered users remote access to bankruptcy case information and documents in the Bankruptcy Court's Electronic Case Files (ECF) system. This information is available 24 hours per day, seven days per week. All documents filed since March 1, 1999 in pending Eastern District of California bankruptcy cases and proceedings (except proofs of claim filed in cases pending prior to March 1, 1999) have been scanned into image format and may be accessed through e-CalWebPACER from the Bankruptcy Court's Internet site (www.caeb.uscourts.gov). Once the electronic filing module is implemented, access to documents filed electronically will also be available through e-CalWebPACER.

Beginning February 1, 2003, an active account with the PACER Service Center and a valid WebPACER login and password will be required to access Eastern District of California bankruptcy case information and imaged documents through the court's Internet site.

All current e-CalWebPACER users who previously established an account with the PACER Service Center and were issued a login and password by the PACER Service Center should be able to access Eastern District of California bankruptcy case information and imaged documents after February 1, 2003, without re-registering with the PACER Service Center. **However, current e-CalWebPACER users who have login codes that begin with a "zz" must register with the PACER Service Center (<http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov>) before they will be able to access Eastern District of California case information and imaged documents after the February 1, 2003, date.** For more information concerning PACER registration, see section 4 below.

Additionally, beginning February 1, 2003, the \$.07 per page user fee imposed by the Judicial Conference of the United States will be charged for electronic access to case information and documents via the court's Internet web site. For additional information concerning costs, see section 5 below.

2. What is Needed

A user will need the items listed below to access the WebPACER system. If there is a problem with in-office equipment, users should contact the equipment vendor or their local systems technician. Neither the court nor the PACER Service Center has the resources to provide extensive technical assistance.

a. Computer - A computer allows the user to view case information on a display screen and to save that case information onto a disk for later reviewing, printing, e-mailing, and editing with a word processor.

While there are no minimum hardware requirements to access WebPACER, other than the system be capable of running a web browser, recommended minimum and optimum hardware specifications are provided below. Because the recommended specifications for accessing WebPACER and for electronic filing are different, attorneys planning to electronically file documents in the future should follow the recommendations for access to WebPACER and electronic filing.

Recommended minimum specifications should be used as a guide to predict whether or not your existing hardware will perform adequately. Recommended optimum specifications should be used as a guide for those purchasing new equipment and services.

Recommended minimum and optimum specifications are subject to change and it is likely that faster, greater capacity equipment will be needed in the future. Therefore, users are encouraged to purchase the fastest computers and connections they can within budget constraints, even beyond what is recommended. Updated system specifications will be posted on the court's Internet web site at www.caeb.uscourts.gov.

Hardware Recommendations For WebPACER Access <u>Without</u> Electronic Filing	
<u>Recommended Minimum Specifications</u> Pentium 166 Mhz or faster 64MB RAM Windows 95/98 Standard VGA display capability	<u>Recommended Optimum Specifications</u> Pentium III 500 Mhz or faster 128 MB RAM or higher Windows NT, 2000, or XP 1024 x 768 x 256 display capability

Hardware Recommendations For WebPACER Access <u>AND</u> Electronic Filing	
<u>Recommended Minimum Specifications</u> Pentium III 500 Mhz or faster 128 MB RAM Windows ME 1024 x 768 x 256 display capability	<u>Recommended Optimum Specifications</u> Pentium IV 1.0 Ghz or faster 256 MB RAM or higher Windows XP 1280 x 1024 x 256 display capability

Additionally, the computer should have adequate hard disk storage; 1 GB of free disk space or more is recommended.

Although not required, law firms may wish to consider acquiring a large capacity storage unit or large capacity removable media drive, as well as an electronic file management system, to address portability and storage requirements.

Finally, law firms with more than 10 computers may find it advantageous to implement some level of device and/or file sharing across a local or wide area network to minimize storage, system administration, and file accessibility overheads. To ascertain whether a change to your current network infrastructure would prove beneficial, please consult your computer professional.

b. Internet Access - WebPACER is accessible through an Internet site; therefore, having Internet access is essential. To access the Internet, you will need the services and software of an Internet Service Provider (ISP). Minimum and recommended Internet connectivity options are as follows:

Minimum Connection
56k or faster modem

Recommended Connection
DSL, cable modem, or ISDN or T1 lines

Connection to WebPACER can be made at speeds less than 56k. However, response time will be slow and system performance will be poor. Likewise, a 56k modem may prove unsatisfactory to anyone making more than very occasional use of the system. To transmit or download a scanned 10-page document will take about 10 minutes using a 56k modem.

The faster the Internet connection, the easier it will be to use WebPACER. Consequently, participants are strongly encouraged to obtain access to the Internet using DSL, cable modem, ISDN, or T-1 lines.

c. Web Browser - WebPACER is a web application that operates on the Internet using a Web browser. Use of Internet Explorer 5.5 or higher is highly recommended. However, other browsers such as Netscape 6.0 or higher may also be functional. For Macintosh users it is suggested that you use Netscape Communicator 4.7.

Netscape users must have JavaScript enabled and Style Sheet disabled.
To do this:

- Click the *Edit* menu, then select *Preferences*.
- Click the *Advanced* category
- Make sure the checkboxes for these *Advanced* categories **ARE** checked:

1. *Enable Java*; and
2. *Enable JavaScript*.

- Make sure the checkbox for *Enable Style Sheets* **IS NOT** checked.

d. Document Viewer Software – Document viewer software will be needed to view documents using WebPACER.

- Adobe Acrobat PDF Reader or Other PDF Reader software will be needed to view electronically filed PDF documents.
- A tiff image viewer will be needed to view images of scanned documents stored in tiff format.

Users should contact their computer professional for proper system configurations.

e. Printer - Notwithstanding the benefits of electronic filing, paper will not be disappearing in the near future. Therefore, you will need a printer adequate to handle your printing needs. Laser printers initially cost more but may prove less expensive in the long run because the cost per page for toner cartridges is much less than the cost per page for ink cartridges.

f. Additional Items – Sometime during 2003, the Court will be capable of accepting electronically filed documents. Although not required to access WebPACER, attorneys planning to electronically file documents will need the following additional items:

1. Document Preparation Software

- A word processing application or forms software page will be needed to create documents. The application or software used must be PDF compatible.
- PDF writer software such as Adobe Acrobat PDF Writer is required to convert electronic documents from a word processing format to PDF format. Adobe Acrobat Version 5 offers two packages for converting documents to PDF – Acrobat 5 Distiller and Acrobat 5 Writer. While Adobe's standard installation automatically installs the Distiller package, we recommend that participants opt for 'custom' installation and also install Adobe Acrobat 5 PDF Writer because it converts files to PDF considerably faster, and produces significantly smaller PDF files, than Adobe Acrobat 5 Distiller.

2. Scanner and Scanner Software

In order to file documents electronically, attorneys will be required to scan documents that are not on their computer in the form of word processing files (for example, a deed to secure a debt or a promissory note). Scanning software must be capable of creating images in PDF format. If you anticipate imaging many documents, you may wish to consider a scanner with a sheet feeder attachment.

3. Availability

Access to electronic information is available virtually 24-hours a day. Down times will be posted on the court's website.

4. Registration

Registration is required prior to accessing WebPACER. Those who do not have a login and password or experience difficulties accessing the system should contact the [PACER Service Center on-line](#) or call toll free (800) 676-6856 or (210) 301-6440.

Users are strongly encouraged to sign up for a PACER account over the Internet, as this is the quickest way to set up such an account. Please be advised, the PACER Service Center sends the PACER account login and password information package by regular mail directly to PACER account applicants.

Support representatives from the PACER Service Center can assist users with problems accessing PACER, answer general questions or accept suggestions. Users can send e-mail messages to pacer@psc.uscourts.gov. Questions are answered in the order received. For faster service, users should include in their message their name, WebPACER account login name, area code and telephone number, e-mail address and name of the court (Eastern District of California Bankruptcy Court). They should not include their password.

5. Cost

Congress has given the Judicial Conference of the United States, the judicial governing body of the U.S. Courts, authority to impose user fees for electronic access to case information and documents (see [Electronic Public Access Miscellaneous Fee Schedule](#)). **Users will be charged \$.07 per page for each case document or report accessed, whether or not it is printed.** When charges are incurred, a transaction report indicating the number of pages billed for that particular transaction will appear at the bottom of each document.

The fee charged to access an imaged document is limited to 30 pages, or \$2.10. This 30 page “cap” applies only to imaged case documents accessed via the court’s web site. It does not apply to docket sheets or reports.

Generally, a page is defined as 54 lines of data. How pages are counted for different types of information is described as follows.

Dockets: Docket reports are generated with form feeds or page breaks marking each page. The number of form feeds or page breaks within each docket are counted and used to determine the number of pages for a particular docket sheet before the document is reformatted for display as an html document. A docket sheet may contain pages with more or less than 54 lines. Form feeds and page breaks do not appear in the html formatted docket displayed on the screen and users are not warned of the page total prior to generating the docket.

Case Reports: Case reports such as the New Case Listing or Mailing Matrix, which do not have form feeds or page breaks, are determined at the rate of 54 lines per page. The lines are counted from the raw data files before they are formatted for display as an html document on the screen. Users are not warned of the page total prior to generating the report.

Search Results: Search results are also billed at the rate of 54 lines per page. Each search performed formats into a web page that is considered one counted page. Each page may be less than 54 lines in total, depending on the search results, but will still be billed as a full page. Users will not be warned of the page total prior to running a specific search.

Images: All documents filed since March 1, 1999 in pending Eastern District of California bankruptcy cases and proceedings (except proofs of claim filed in cases pending prior to March 1, 1999) have been scanned into image format and are available online. Images are billed according to the number of pages scanned; therefore, each scanned page equals one billable page. **Users will receive a warning screen with the page total prior to accepting the charges. The fee charged to access an imaged document is limited to 30 pages, or \$2.10.**

6. Printing

If WebPACER information is printed, the print job will not always match the number of pages billed. The number of pages printed is dependent on individual printer and browser settings. All users are billed the same amount for the same information (54 lines of data) regardless of the browser settings or printer configurations. A transaction receipt and the Review Billing History option are provided to review charges.

7. Billing

Billing statements are sent quarterly by the PACER Service Center. However, no fee is owed until a user accrues charges of more than \$10 in a single calendar year. Statements are not mailed to users whose accounts do not have a balance due of at least \$10. Once the balance due exceeds \$10, the user will receive a statement that includes the current and previous charges accrued during the calendar year.

If a client code is entered for a transaction, that client code will appear on the billing statement. Client code features are thirty-two character text fields provided for tracking charges (for attorney billing purposes). A client code will not appear on the bill unless it is entered at the time of the transaction.