Scanning, Best Practices

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Avoid scanning when possible

All documents filed in CM/ECF must be in PDF format. Documents converted to PDF format directly from word processing software are known as PDF text documents.   Documents converted to PDF format by scanning (or imaging) paper documents are known as PDF image documents.   A PDF text document is considerably smaller than a PDF image document.   It can also be searched for words and phrases and sections of the document can be highlighted and/or copied, which is very helpful to attorneys and chambers' staff.   A PDF image document cannot be searched for words and phrases and sections of the document cannot be highlighted or copied unless the document is scanned using Optical Character Recognition (OCR) functionality.   Whenever possible, please file PDF text documents in CM/ECF.   When that is not possible, please file PDF image documents that were scanned using OCR functionality.   See OCR Functionality.

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Prepare documents for scanning

Check documents for marginalia and other content that may not scan clearly. Consider making a copy of the document before scanning it to darken such content so that it is legible after it is filed in CM/ECF.

Use white or light colored exhibit stickers to mark attachments.   Blue exhibit stickers often turn black when scanned and become illegible.

Consider requesting a deposition transcript in electronic format from the court reporter so that it does not need to be scanned.

Check your PDF writer program to see if it has a feature that allows scanned PDF documents and unscanned PDF documents to be combined into a single PDF document.   This is especially handy if the signature page containing multiple signatures is the only page of a document that needs to be scanned.

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Scanner settings

Your scanned PDF image documents can be larger than necessary, depending on your scanner's settings.   Documents larger than 12MB in size must be divided into smaller documents before they can be filed in CM/ECF.   12MB megabytes = 12,288 kilobytes (KB)

Ideal Scanner Settings:

- Set scanner resolution to no more and no less than 300dpi.

- Set scanner image type to Black & White. Do NOT scan in Grayscale.

- Set scanner image type to Color only when a judge needs to see something in color, such as a color photograph.   Do NOT scan a document in color just because it was signed in blue ink.   1/23/14