Creation of PDFs

What is a PDF document?

Documents in Portable Document File (PDF) format do not require a copy of the word processing program used to create them in order to be viewed. They can be viewed by anyone with a free viewer such as Acrobat Reader, a product of Adobe Systems, Inc. In addition to its cross platform advantage, a PDF document matches very closely the format of the original document in which the PDF document was created. All of the pleadings in the MEC system are stored in PDF format. To view PDF files, you must have a PDF viewing software such as Acrobat Reader, which you may download free from the Adobe website http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html. You will view PDF documents the way they were created, and you may save and print them in that format.

How do I make a PDF document from a word processing program?

There are several ways in which you can get a document from a word processing program into the PDF format. The newer versions of some common word processors include the ability to publish a document to PDF built right into the word-processing software. In WordPerfect 9 and 10, you can click on File and then "Publish to PDF" to convert your WordPerfect file (.wpd) to PDF. MS-Word (up to version XP) does NOT have this capability. Adobe, the inventors of the PDF format, can be found at http://www.adobe.com, where you can find both the free reader version of the software, which can be used to retrieve documents from MEC, and the writer version, which can create documents for posting. When you've installed Acrobat, you can make PDF files right out of your word-processing software simply by "printing" the document, and selecting the "printer" called "Acrobat PDFWriter" from the drop down list of available printers. That process will actually save a file in PDF format, with a ".pdf" file extension, on your hard drive. There are many other vendors besides Adobe who provide software to create PDF documents. Please note that MEC does not endorse or recommend any specific PDF software. Since there are so many different applications, and we could not depict instructions for all, we have chosen to depict all our instructions with reference to Adobe.

Tips for making a PDF document using a scanner.

- Use 200dpi when scanning documents.
- Set image type to black and white bitmap, text (image only), or line art.
- Do not use OCR or Textbridge. These options scan the document for altering or word processing. For filing purposes, we need only an image of the document.
- Use black ink, if possible. Blue ink and pencil do not scan well. If necessary, make a copy of the document before scanning it and darken using the copy machine settings.
- For large documents that require a wet signature, where only the last page has a signature, consider converting the document to PDF in your word processor and only scanning the signature page. Use Adobe Acrobat Writer to combine the two pdf files.
- Request depositions on floppy disk and convert them to pdf using a word processor.
- Use Adobe Acrobat Writer software on the scanning computer to simplify the scanning process. Scan documents directly into Adobe by clicking File > Import > Scan on the menu bar. (Note: you can still use pdfFactory on other computers to convert word processed documents).
- Check the size of a scanned document before uploading it to MEC. The size limit is 5 MB per document. To check the file size, locate the file in Windows Explorer, right click on the file and choose Properties.
- If a scanned document is larger than 5 MB, use Adobe Acrobat Writer to extract pages from the document to a separate file. Or use pdfFactory to print the pages to two separate files. This prevents you from having to re-scan the document.