

# Western District of North Carolina

## Instructions for Filing Large Documents

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When an electronic filing involves a pleading that is large in byte size or has numerous exhibits, it can be a challenge. The following information should help you to successfully submit these types of electronic documents.

### File Size Limit

The maximum size of a document which ECF will accept is 5 megabytes for a single PDF document. If you attempt to file a document in excess of 5 megabytes, you will receive an error message telling you that the document cannot be loaded as it is over 5.0 MB. Documents converted from Word or WordPerfect to PDF using conversion software will rarely approach the 5 megabyte per document limit. However, depending on the characteristics of the document, scanned imaged PDF documents may well exceed the 5 megabyte limit.

We recommend you take the following steps in order to minimize the cumulative size of each submission: 1) Convert rather than scan documents, as scanning creates a much larger file size. 2) Use scanner settings that minimize document size (see scanner tips below.) 3) Request depositions in electronic format such as CD or flash drive and convert them to PDF using a word processor. Note: pursuant to Local Rule 26.2, discovery material should not be filed with this court unless it is filed in support of, or in opposition to, a motion and should be limited to those portions of the material directly necessary to support the motion or petition. 4) Carefully choose the exhibits necessary to support your position.

### Scanner Tips

If the document is a scanned PDF, check to assure that you are using the most efficient scanner settings. The following are suggested scanner tips assembled by various courts:

- Use 200 dpi for 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.
- 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 with the copy machine settings.
- Exhibits in color or with graphics: our Administrative Procedures require the filing party to configure their scanners at 200 dpi and in black and white rather than in color. Documents appearing in color in their original form such as color photographs, may be scanned in color and then uploaded to ECF.
- Check the size of a scanned document before uploading it to ECF. To check the file size, locate the file in Windows Explorer, right click on the file and choose Properties.

There is no way to tell exactly how many pages you can get into a file under 5 MB when scanning as it depends on what is on the pages themselves and your scanner, but here are some general guidelines:

- 100 pages converted to PDF may be only 1.5 MB
- 100 pages scanned to PDF at high resolution may be 18 MB
- 100 pages scanned to PDF at low resolution may be 2.9 MB

You must consult your scanner's documentation or the manufacturer's website for assistance in using your scanner. Our Help Desk has no information on your scanner.

Our Administrative Procedures also require the filing party to verify the readability of scanned documents before filing them electronically.

## Splitting PDF Documents into Separate Files

Should the document still exceed 5 megabytes after using the tips above, you should break the document into separate PDF documents of less than 5 megabytes each. We suggest you try to divide up the document in logical places (such as between chapters or sections of the document.) When uploading the attachments, add text in the description field similar to: Exhibit 1, Contract, Part 1; Exhibit 1, Contract, Part 2. You can use the extract or the split document features in Adobe Acrobat Pro to break up your document. Additionally, PDF Split and Merge, freeware available at [www.pdfsam.org](http://www.pdfsam.org), performs this task as well. This prevents having to rescan the document. NOTE: we are not able to provide technical support for this or other software you may be using.

## Filings Having Multiple Attachments

It is difficult to estimate how many attachments or total size of the documents in one e-filing, because there are so many different factors. When testing using a high speed internet, we were able to successfully e-file in one filing: 14 separate PDFs with a total size of 55 MB; additionally, we were successful in filing 72 separate PDFs with a total size of 18 MB. We suggest you keep the total file size for any one transaction under 40 to 50 megabytes.

1. File your pleading with your first set of attachments (keeping the aggregate total of the filing to less than 40 to 50 MB) using the appropriate **motion, response** or other event.
2. Create a pleading with the case caption, identifying what attachments you are filing, and attach a certificate of service to the pleading. Use the **Attachment** or **Exhibit** event under **Other Documents** and attach this pleading as the main document and add the additional exhibits or attachments as attachments to the main document. After attaching all the PDF documents, you will be prompted to link this entry to the previously filed pleading. Continue with this process until all of your attachments or exhibits have been entered.