



U. S. District Court, Southern District of Indiana

Technical Guide for Using Notices of Electronic Filing (NEFs)

(Effective 8/20/2026)

Overview

An e-mailed Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) is automatically generated by the court's CM/ECF system for every event docketed in CM/ECF, including sealed events. The NEF identifies the date and time of filing, case name, case number, filer, document number, docket text, e-mail recipients and case participants who do not receive electronic notice (e.g., *pro se* parties). When one or more documents are attached to the event, the NEF also displays the document description and electronic document stamp.

Notice of Electronic Filing

The following transaction was entered by Attorney, One on 5/29/2015 at 3:16 PM EDT and filed on 5/29/2015

Case Name: SMITH v. JONES

Case Number: [1:15-cv-00001-TWP-TAB](#)

Filer: JOHN SMITH

Document Number: [16](#)

Case Number Link
(requires PACER access)

Document Link
(free look)

Docket Text:

NOTICE of Appearance by One Attorney on behalf of Plaintiff JOHN SMITH. (Attorney, One)

1:15-cv-00001-TWP-TAB Notice has been electronically mailed to:

One Attorney oattorney@sample.com, secondary@sample.com

Two Attorney tattorney@example.com, seconrdary@example.com

NOTE: Clicking on the case number hyperlink in the NEF prompts the user for a PACER login, since it links to the docket sheet (fees apply).

Free Look

Case participants (attorneys of record) who receive NEFs in their cases, as well as secondary e-mail recipients associated with those attorney accounts, are each granted one "free look" at the document(s) hyperlinked in NEFs. Once a "free look" has been used by the recipient, any subsequent electronic access to the document(s) will prompt for a PACER login (fees apply). Recipients are encouraged to save or print PDF documents from their initial "free look".

NOTE: If unused -- "free looks" expire after 15 days from the date of filing.

Access to Restricted Documents

Access to certain case documents is restricted to case participants (*e.g.*, sealed documents or documents filed in social security appeals cases). When accessing these documents through the document number link in the NEF, the user is prompted for his/her PACER login in order to verify access privileges, but still receives the “free look”.

Access to Sealed Documents and Sealed Cases

At the direction of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, the Southern District of Indiana has implemented new procedures for the storage and management of sealed documents, effective September 24, 2025. Parties will continue to file sealed documents in CM/ECF under existing procedures and local rules. However, any documents filed under seal will only be accessible to and viewable by authorized court staff in CM/ECF.