

CIVIL CASE OPENING MANUAL

Attorneys who have a login and password for the CM/ECF system can electronically open a new case. All others must file in the traditional manner.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The electronic case opening process consists of *two steps*. ***Both steps below must be completed.***

1. Provide information from the Civil Cover Sheet, enter all parties (plaintiffs and defendants) and receive a case number.
2. Upload the initiating document and receive judge assigned.

The following initiating documents can be filed to open a New Civil Case:

- New Complaints
- Notices of Removal
- Petitions for Writ of Habeas Corpus
- Petitions for Writ of Mandamus
- Application on Arbitration Award

If opening a miscellaneous matter, see the instructions for ***Opening a Miscellaneous Case.***

To successfully open a case electronically:

1. Complete the entire process as instructed in this manual.
2. ***DO NOT*** click the back button.
3. ***DO NOT*** open the same case twice.
4. ***DO NOT*** electronically open cases that should be filed under seal.

5. If there are any questions or concerns while opening a case or if a sealed case needs to be opened, **CALL the Clerk's Office Help Desk at (313) 234-5000.**

OPENING A CASE

Have the **Civil Cover Sheet** information and party information available. The case number will be assigned after the following steps are completed.

Step 1: Login to CM/ECF. Click **Civil** on the blue menu bar.

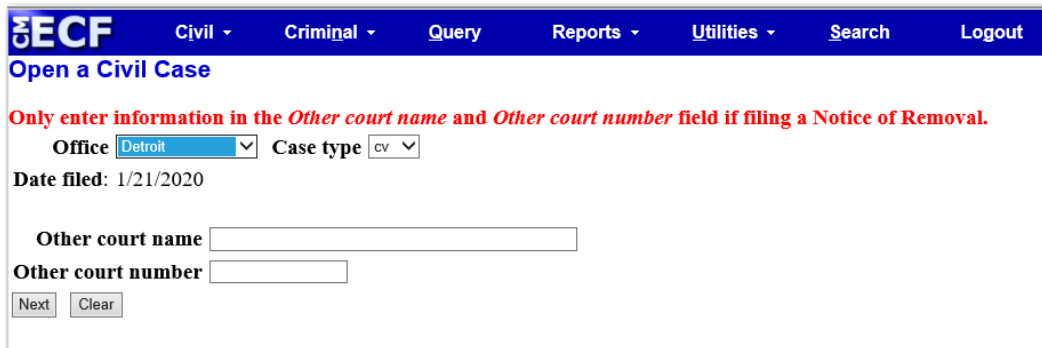
Step 2: Select **Open a Civil Case**



The screenshot shows the ECF system interface. At the top is a blue navigation bar with the ECF logo and menu items: Civil, Criminal, Query, Reports, Utilities, Search, and Logout. Below the navigation bar is the 'Civil Events' section. It contains several categories of links: 'Open a Case' (with a red arrow pointing to 'Open a Civil Case'), 'Initial Pleadings and Service', 'Motions and Related Filings', and 'Applications, Petitions, Requests, and Related Filings'. There are also sections for 'Other Filings' and 'Post-Judgment Filings'.

Step 3: If opening a Notice of Removal, enter the **Other Court Name** and **Other Court Number**.

If opening a Complaint proceed to the next screen.



The screenshot shows the 'Open a Civil Case' form. At the top is the same blue navigation bar as in the previous screenshot. Below it is the title 'Open a Civil Case' and a red instruction: 'Only enter information in the Other court name and Other court number field if filing a Notice of Removal.' The form includes fields for 'Office' (set to Detroit), 'Case type' (set to cv), and 'Date filed' (set to 1/21/2020). There are also input fields for 'Other court name' and 'Other court number'. At the bottom are 'Next' and 'Clear' buttons.

Step 4: Enter the statistical information from the *Civil Cover Sheet*

CMCECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Logout

Open a Civil Case

Much of the information needed for this screen is found on the civil cover sheet. Be sure to enter the appropriate county pursuant to LR 83.10. Refer to the Online Case Submission Instructions found on the Court website.

Jurisdiction 3 (Federal Question) Filter: Clear filter

Cause of action Filter: Clear filter

Nature of suit 0 (zero) Filter: Clear filter

Origin 1 (Original Proceeding)

Citizenship plaintiff

Citizenship defendant

Jury demand n (None) Class action n (No Class Action Alleged) Demand (\$000)

Arbitration code County Wayne

Fee status pd (paid) Fee date 1/21/2020 Date transfer

Next Clear

- 1. Jurisdiction:** Select the jurisdiction that best reflects the case.
 - a. United States Plaintiff** - Lawsuits by agencies and officers of the United States.
 - b. United States Defendant** - Lawsuits where the United States, its officers, or agencies are being sued.
 - c. Federal Question** - Lawsuits where jurisdiction arises under the Constitution, an amendment to the Constitution, an act of Congress or a treaty of the United States.
 - d. Diversity** - Lawsuits where parties are citizens or businesses of different states or countries. The citizenships of the parties will be entered in the corresponding fields.
- 2. Cause of Action:** Select the cause of action that best reflects the case. Only one can be chosen. No “filter” information is needed.
- 3. Nature of Suit:** Select the nature of suit that best describes the basis of the case. Only one can be chosen. No “filter” information is needed.

4. **Origin:** Select the origin that reflects the case.
 - a. **1 – Original Proceeding:** Use for all cases except Removals from a State Court
 - b. **2 – Removal from State Court**
5. **Citizenship of Plaintiff/Defendant:** Select the citizenship of the Plaintiff and Defendant ONLY if the jurisdiction of the case is 4 - Diversity. **** Select Citizen if the party is a person; and Incorporated/Principal Place of Business if the party is a business.**
6. **Jury Demand:** If jury demand is listed in the complaint select the appropriate jury demand option.
 - a. For a Complaint – if jury demand is listed select **“p”** for plaintiff. If no jury demand is listed in the complaint leave at **“n”** for none.
 - b. For a Notice of Removal - if just the defendant is demanding a jury choose **“d”** for defendant. If both parties are demanding a jury choose **“b”** for both parties.
7. **Class Action:** Select the option that best reflects the case.
8. **Demand (\$000):** If a monetary demand is listed in the complaint, enter the dollar amount to the nearest thousand with no punctuation.

Example: If the dollar demand listed in the complaint is \$75,000, enter “75”. If the amount is \$10,000,000 (ten million) or more, enter “9999”. No more than four digits should be listed in this field.
9. **Arbitration Code:** Leave blank.

10. **County:** The drop-down menu has every county in the State of Michigan as well as “XX US, Outside State” and “XX Outside US”.
****The county defaults to “Wayne” make sure to select the appropriate county for the case. This selection determines which division the case will be assigned. ****

The county should be selected in this order:

- a. If filing a Notice of Removal, choose the county in which the case was pending in State Court.
 - b. The county in which the plaintiff resides.
 - c. The county in which the claim arose.
 - d. If a defendant is a US employee or officer being sued in their official capacity, or if the defendant is a US agency, choose the county in which an office is located.
 - e. The county in which the defendant resides or has a place of business.
11. **Fee Status:** Select the appropriate fee status. The selection defaults to **“pd (paid)”**.
- If filing an Application to Proceed Without Prepaying Fees or Costs, select **“fp (in forma pauperis)”**.
 - If the case is being filed by the United States, select **“wv (waived or USA)”**.
12. **Fee Date:** Leave the current date.
13. **Date Transfer:** Leave blank.

Step 5: Enter the party name in the Last / Business Name field and click **Search**.

The screenshot shows the CM ECF web application interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the following items: Civil, Criminal, Query, Reports, Utilities, Search, and Logout. Below the navigation bar, the page title is "Open a Civil Case". A prominent red warning message reads: "DO NOT ENTER ANY ADDRESS INFORMATION FOR YOUR PARTY UNLESS THE PARTY IS PRO SE." Below this, instructions state: "Enter party using upper and lower case letters. Refer to the Party Name Data Conventions on the Court website." Two examples are provided: "Example: Plumbers Local 123 (NOT TRUSTEES OF PLUMBERS LOCAL UNION 123) [Note: Trustees of is entered in the following Party Text field]" and "Example: Michigan, State of (NOT state of michigan)".

The main interface is divided into two sections. The left section contains buttons for "Add New Party" and "Create Case", along with "Collapse All" and "Expand All" links. Below these is a text input field containing "2:20-cv-?????". The right section is titled "Search for a party" and contains three input fields: "Last / Business Name" (with "United States of Am" entered), "First Name", and "Middle Name". A "Search" button is located below these fields. The "Search Results" section displays a list of search results: "United States of America" (repeated four times), "United States of America, Department of Vetera", and "United States of America, Dept of Veteran'". At the bottom of the search results are two buttons: "Select Party" and "Create New Party".

Step 6: If the party **appears** in the **Search Results**, highlight the party by clicking on the name then click **Select Party**.

If the party **does not appear** in the Search Results, click **Create New Party**.

Step 7: The **Party Information** screen will appear on the right side of the screen. Enter the Party Information using the **Data Conventions Guide**. Click **Add Party**.

ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Logout

Open a Civil Case

DO NOT ENTER ANY ADDRESS INFORMATION FOR YOUR PARTY UNLESS THE PARTY IS PRO SE.

Enter party using upper and lower case letters. Refer to the Party Name Data Conventions on the Court website

Example: Plumbers Local 123 (NOT TRUSTEES OF PLUMBERS LOCAL UNION 123)
[Note: *Trustees of* is entered in the following Party Text field]

Example: Michigan, State of (NOT state of michigan)

Add New Party Create Case Party Information

Last name United States of America First name

Middle name Generation

Title

Role Defendant (dft.pty)

Pro se No

Prisoner Id Unit

Office

Address1

Address 2 Show this address on the docket

Address 3 City

State Zip Country

Prison

Phone Fax

Party text

Start date 1/21/2020 End date

Corporation no Notice yes

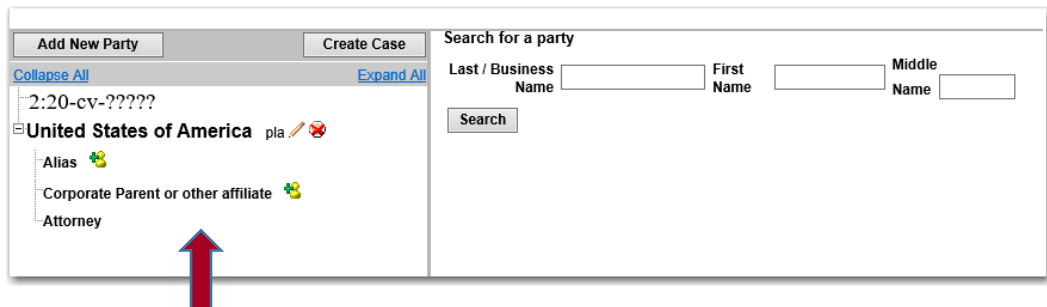
Add Party



On this screen:


- Select the appropriate **“Role”**.
(Note that the system defaults to Defendant (dft.pty).
- **DO NOT** add address information.
- **DO NOT** add title.

Step 8: The party will appear in the *Participant Tree* on the left side of the screen.




Continue adding the parties until ALL parties involved in the case are added to the Participant Tree on the left side.



- If alias information needs to be added, click  next to Alias.
- **DO NOT** add Corporate Parent or other affiliate information.

Step 9: After **all** the parties have been entered, click *Create Case*.
A case number will be assigned.



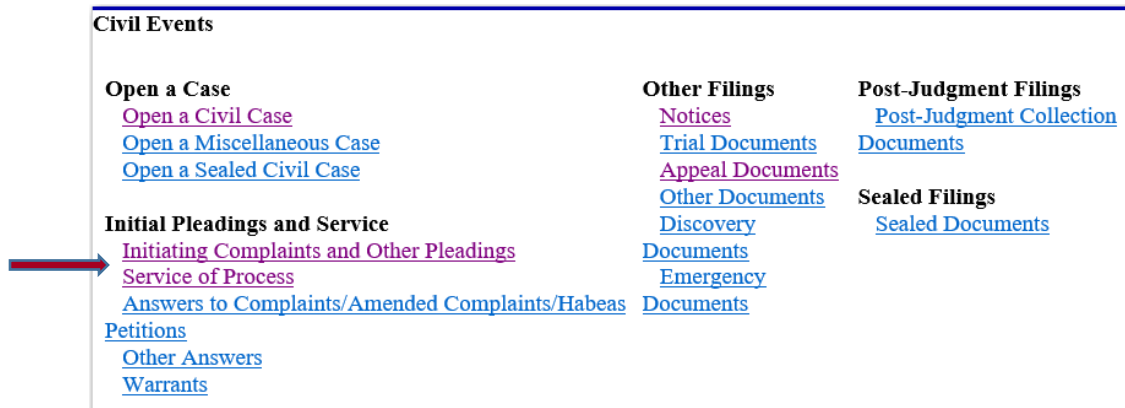
Step 1 of the case opening process is now complete.

Step 2: Continue to docket the initiating document which will successfully complete the opening of a new civil case.

DOCKETING THE INITIATING DOCUMENT

Step 1: Click **Civil** on the menu bar.

Step 2: Select **Initiating Complaint and Other Pleadings**.

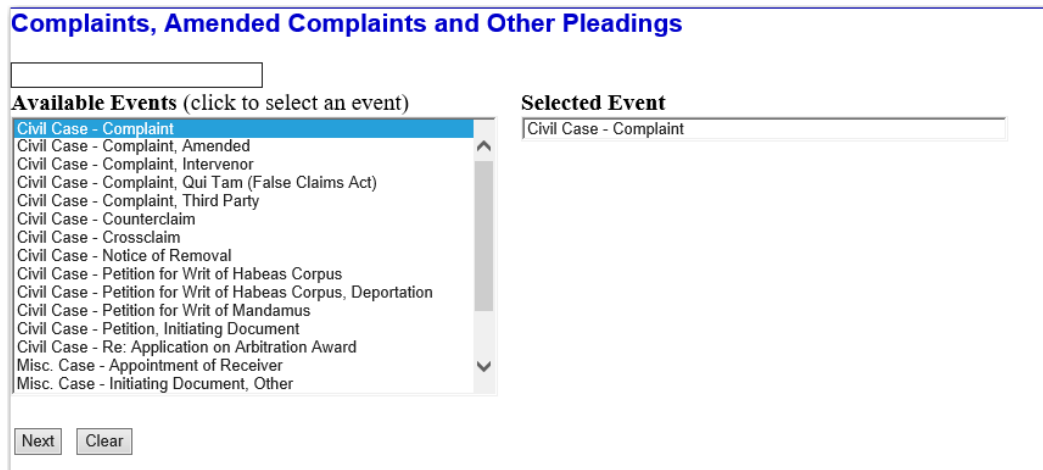


Civil Events

Open a Case Open a Civil Case Open a Miscellaneous Case Open a Sealed Civil Case	Other Filings Notices Trial Documents Appeal Documents Other Documents Discovery Documents Emergency Documents	Post-Judgment Filings Post-Judgment Collection Documents Sealed Filings Sealed Documents
Initial Pleadings and Service Initiating Complaints and Other Pleadings Service of Process Answers to Complaints/Amended Complaints/Habeas Petitions Other Answers Warrants		

Step 3: Select the appropriate event by clicking on it.

The selected event will then be listed under **Selected Events**. Click **Next**.



Complaints, Amended Complaints and Other Pleadings

Available Events (click to select an event)	Selected Event
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Civil Case - ComplaintCivil Case - Complaint, AmendedCivil Case - Complaint, IntervenorCivil Case - Complaint, Qui Tam (False Claims Act)Civil Case - Complaint, Third PartyCivil Case - CounterclaimCivil Case - CrossclaimCivil Case - Notice of RemovalCivil Case - Petition for Writ of Habeas CorpusCivil Case - Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus, DeportationCivil Case - Petition for Writ of MandamusCivil Case - Petition, Initiating DocumentCivil Case - Re: Application on Arbitration AwardMisc. Case - Appointment of ReceiverMisc. Case - Initiating Document, Other	<input type="text" value="Civil Case - Complaint"/>

Step 4: Enter the assigned case number then click **Next**.

The screenshot shows a web interface titled "Complaints, Amended Complaints and Other Pleadings". Below the title is a section labeled "Civil Case Number" with a text input field containing "2:20-cv-10187". Below the input field are two buttons: "Next" and "Clear".

Step 5: Select the filer(s). Click **Next**.

The screenshot shows a web interface titled "Complaints, Amended Complaints and Other Pleadings" with a link "2:20-cv-10187 United States of America v. Doe". Below the link is a "Pick Filer" dialog box. The dialog has a "Pick Filer" button and "Collapse All" and "Expand All" links. The list of filers includes "John Doe dft" and "United States of America pla". To the right of the list is a "Select the filer." section with "Select the Party:" and "Select a Group:" options. The "Select the Party:" section has a list box with "Doe, John [dft]" and "United States of America [pla]". The "Select a Group:" section has radio buttons for "No Group", "All Defendants", "All Plaintiffs", and "All Parties". Below the list box are "Next", "Clear", and "New Filer" buttons.

If there are multiple parties to select, click the first party then hold down the "Control" button and select additional parties. You can also select a group such as **All Defendants** or **All Plaintiffs**.

Step 6: Associating the filer, the attorney, to their party.

Complaints, Amended Complaints and Other Pleadings
[2:20-cv-10187 United States of America v. Doe](#)

If you do not intend to be an attorney of record and appear on the front of the docket, remove the first checkbox by the corresponding party.

United States of America (pty:pla) represented by Test Attorney (aty) Notice

The check box before the party will associate the attorney logged in as the attorney of record for that party.

If the check box is NOT selected, no attorney of record will be associated with the party.

Step 7: Select the party **“As to”** or **“Against”**. Click **Next**.

Complaints, Amended Complaints and Other Pleadings
[2:20-cv-10187 United States of America v. Doe](#)

United States of America pla
John Doe dft

Select the party "As to" or "Against" (Not the filer!)

Select the Party: OR Select a Group:

United States of America [pla]
Doe, John [dft]

No Group
 All Defendants
 All Plaintiffs
 All Parties

Step 8: Upload document(s). Click the **Browse** button. Select your document. Click **Next**.

For more instructions on uploading documents see [How to Upload a Document](#). (hyperlink)

Complaints, Amended Complaints and Other Pleadings
[2:20-cv-10187 United States of America v. Doe](#)

Select the pdf document and any attachments.

Main Document
 Browse...

Attachments	Category	Description
1. <input type="text"/> Browse...	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Step 9: Enter the parties' county information in each box. The information will appear in the docket text of the filing.

Complaints, Amended Complaints and Other Pleadings
[2:20-cv-10187 United States of America v. Doe](#)

Enter the requested county information. If the action arose or if a party resides outside of Michigan, enter *Out of State* or *Out of Country*. If the party is the U.S. Government, enter *USA*.

Enter county in which action arose:

Enter county in which the first listed plaintiff resides:

Enter county in which the first listed defendant resides:

Step 10: Answer the following questions.

Complaints, Amended Complaints and Other Pleadings
[2:20-cv-10187 United States of America v. Doe](#)

Has this case been previously dismissed from this or another court?

yes
 no

Complaints, Amended Complaints and Other Pleadings
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Are there any pending or previously discontinued or dismissed companion cases in this or any other court, including state court?

Companion cases are matters in which it appears substantially similar evidence will be offered or the same or related parties are present and the cases arise out of the same transaction or occurrence.

yes
 no

If the answer is **“Yes”** to either of the questions, enter the requested court information.

Complaints, Amended Complaints and Other Pleadings
[2:20-cv-10187 United States of America v. Doe](#)

Enter the following:

Name of the Court:

Case Number:

Judge Name:

Step 11: Answer the jury demand question. A jury demand must be listed in complaint in order to answer **“Yes”**.

Complaints, Amended Complaints and Other Pleadings
[2:20-cv-10187 United States of America v. Doe](#)

Does this complaint include a jury demand?

Yes
 No

Step 12: Select the appropriate fee status.

Complaints, Amended Complaints and Other Pleadings
[2:20-cv-10187 United States of America v. Doe](#)

Select one of the following

fee mandatory
 filing on behalf of United States
 ifp application will be filed
 fee waiver included in accordance with 28 USC 1916

Step 13: Pay the filing fee.

Complaints, Amended Complaints and Other Pleadings
[2:20-cv-10187 United States of America v. Doe](#)

The required filing fee must be paid online using a credit card.

WARNING: After payment of the filing fee, you MUST continue with the docket transaction until its completion. Failure to continue will result in your credit card being charged, with no record of your entry on the case docket.

Complaints, Amended Complaints and Other Pleadings

[2:20-cv-10187 United States of America v. Doe](#)

Are you paying the filing fee via credit card Y/N?

If paying the filing fee online select **“yes”**. The filer will be redirected to the [Pacer.gov](#) website.

If the filing fee **IS NOT** going to be paid online, select **“no”**. The filing fee must be paid either in person at the court or by mailing a check within 7 days. Be sure to include the case number with your payment.

[Pacer.gov](#) payment screen


Pay Filing Fee for Michigan Eastern District Court (test)

*** Required Information**

Payment Amount

Amount Due * **\$400.00**

Select a Payment Method


Jane Villanueva
XXXXXXXXXXXX1111
01/2023

Enter a credit card

Enter an ACH account

Note: We protect the security of your information during transmission using Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) software, which encrypts information you submit.



DO NOT click the back button. The system will bounce the e-filer out. If bounced from the system, contact the Clerk's Office Help Desk at (313) 234-500 to verify that payment was made and how to proceed.

DO NOT refile the case.

Step 14: Issuance of Summons

Complaints, Amended Complaints and Other Pleadings
[2:20-cv-10187 United States of America v. Doe](#)

To accomplish service of this complaint, please select one of the following. Note - Court staff will electronically issue a summons within one business day.

Summons Requested
 No Summons Requested at this Time

If the filer ***is*** requesting the Court to issue summons, select ***“Summons Requested”***. The Court will electronically issue the summons.

If the filer ***is not*** requesting summons, select ***“No Summons Requested at this Time”***.

Step 15: Preview the docket text. The free text box may be used to describe the filing but ***is not necessary*** to complete.

Complaints, Amended Complaints and Other Pleadings
[2:20-cv-10187 United States of America v. Doe](#)

Docket Text: Modify as Appropriate.

COMPLAINT [] filed by United States of America against John Doe with Jury Demand . Plaintiff requests summons issued. Fee Required - Fee Not Paid. County of 1st Plaintiff: Oakland - County Where Action Arose: Macomb - County of 1st Defendant: Wayne. [Previously dismissed case: No] [Possible companion case(s): MIED Western Michigan, 20-10101, Judge Smith] (Attorney, Test)



If errors are noticed at this time, continue the filing and ***contact*** the Clerk's Office Help Desk at **(313) 234-5000**. ***DO NOT*** click the back button to correct the errors.

Step 16: Review the docket text before submitting and click **Next** to file the initiating document.

Complaints, Amended Complaints and Other Pleadings
[2:20-cv-10187 United States of America v. Doe](#)

Docket Text: Final Text

COMPLAINT filed by United States of America against John Doe with Jury Demand. **Plaintiff requests summons issued. Fee Required - Fee Not Paid. County of 1st Plaintiff: Oakland - County Where Action Arose: Macomb - County of 1st Defendant: Wayne. [Previously dismissed case: No] [Possible companion case(s): MIED Western Michigan, 20-10101, Judge Smith] (Attorney, Test)**

Attention!! Pressing the NEXT button on this screen commits this transaction. You will have no further opportunity to modify this transaction if you continue.

Source Document Path (for confirmation only):
C:\Users\sarahschoenherr\Desktop\AO_120.pdf pages: 1

Step 17: The Judge will be assigned, and the filing is complete.

A Notice of Electronic Filing (“NEF”) will be emailed to the attorney of record.

Complaints, Amended Complaints and Other Pleadings
[2:20-cv-10187 United States of America v. Doe](#)

U.S. District Court
Eastern District of Michigan

Notice of Electronic Filing

The following transaction was entered by Attorney, Test on 1/24/2020 at 12:25 PM EST and filed on 1/24/2020

Case Name: United States of America v. Doe
Case Number: [2:20-cv-10187-BAF-DRG](#)
Filer: United States of America
Document Number: [1](#)
Judge(s) Assigned: Bernard A. Friedman (presiding), David R. Grand (referral)

Docket Text:
COMPLAINT filed by United States of America against John Doe with Jury Demand. **Plaintiff requests summons issued. Fee Required - Fee Not Paid. County of 1st Plaintiff: Oakland - County Where Action Arose: Macomb - County of 1st Defendant: Wayne. [Previously dismissed case: No] [Possible companion case(s): MIED Western Michigan, 20-10101, Judge Smith] (Attorney, Test)**

2:20-cv-10187-BAF-DRG Notice has been electronically mailed to: