

PACER Turns 25

In September 1988, the Judicial Conference of the United States approved a new way of providing information to the public, through a service known as Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER). Initially, PACER only provided access to case dockets and summary information about each case. That changed in the late 1990s, when the Case Management/Electronic Case Files (CM/ECF) system, which allows attorneys to file case documents over the Internet, was implemented.

Since then, PACER and CM/ECF have together fundamentally changed how federal courts, attorneys, judges, and court staff perform their jobs day-to-day. Lawyers speak of reduced stress at a workday's end, knowing they can electronically file a document until midnight, without fear that the courthouse doors will close on them. And everyone, from a self-represented litigant to an appellate judge, can track cases and case documents in nearly real time. Today, PACER and CM/ECF provide online access to hundreds of millions of documents. Well over a million users have accessed the two systems.

Read more about PACER turning 25 under the What's New section at www.pacer.gov.

Have You Updated Your Security Information?

In the coming months, improvements to the PACER system will include the addition of a self-service login retrieval and password reset feature. Once this feature is in place, all PACER accounts will be required to have a valid email address, security question/answer, and a date of birth on file. Please take a moment to verify that your PACER account contains the required information. Follow these steps:

- 1) Go to www.pacer.gov and log in to **Manage My PACER Account**.
- 2) Under Maintenance Options, select **Set Security Information**.
- 3) Add any missing information, including **email address, security question & answer, and date of birth**; then click **Submit**.

For those who share accounts, this is also a good time to consider converting to firm billing using a PACER Administrative Account. This account allows you to provide an individual account to each PACER user within your organization and still receive a single bill. For more information, go to http://www.pacer.gov/reg_firm.html.

If you need assistance with these updates, please call the PACER Service Center at (800) 676-6856, or email us at pacer@psc.uscourts.gov.

Questions or Comments regarding information in the announcement?

Email pacer@psc.uscourts.gov or call (800) 676-6856

PACER Password Security

PACER password security is extremely important. To be effective, your password must be difficult for others to guess but easy for you to remember. A strong password consists of upper and lower case letters, numbers, and at least one symbol. Taking the following steps will help keep your PACER password safe.

- Make sure your computer is actively protected by keeping your computer's anti-virus software up to date.
- Never share your PACER password. If anyone else knows your password, it's no longer secure.
- When an employee leaves your organization, use your PACER Administrative Account to deactivate their login.
- Change your PACER password regularly to prevent unauthorized use of your account. The PACER Service Center recommends changing passwords every 90 days.

PACER Policy Reminder

Public Access to Court Electronic Records is supported by user fees. Any attempt to collect data from PACER in a manner that avoids billing is strictly prohibited and may result in criminal prosecution or civil action. PACER privileges will be terminated if, in the judgment of judiciary personnel, they are being misused. Misuse includes, but is not limited to, using an automated process to repeatedly access those portions of the PACER application that do not assess a fee (e.g., calendar events report or case header information) for purposes of collecting case information.

General Information

The PACER Service Center hours of operation are 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM Central time, Monday through Friday. The service center will be closed for Federal holidays including:

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, January 20
- President's Day, February 17
- Memorial Day, May 26
- Independence Day, July 4
- Labor Day, September 1
- Columbus Day, October 13
- Veteran's Day, November 11
- Thanksgiving Day, November 27
- Christmas Day, December 25

Firm Billing

The PACER Service Center offers a firm billing option called the PACER Administrative Account (PAA). This service lets you receive a single invoice for charges from multiple logins by setting up a firm-wide PAA. Moreover, the PAA can be used to manage a group of logins. The administrator of a PAA can:

- Choose which firm accounts to roll into the PAA by adding existing logins.
- Set up new logins for the firm's PACER users and receive login information immediately.
- Activate and deactivate individual logins as needed.
- Update user information for a login.

See www.pacer.gov for additional information or to register for a PACER Administrative Account. Please note the PAA is for administrative purposes only and does not provide access to case information.

Billing Information

- ◆ The PACER Service Center accepts Discover, VISA, MasterCard, and American Express. Log in to Manage My PACER Account at www.pacer.gov to pay by credit card.
- ◆ The PACER Service Center's Federal Tax ID Number is 74-2747938.
- ◆ A fee of \$53 will be assessed if your payment is returned.
- ◆ Receipts for the most recent payment made to a PACER account can be accessed online. Log in to Manage My PACER Account at www.pacer.gov then select Check Balance.
- ◆ Accounts with credit cards on file will be autobilled up to 7 days prior to the due date.