

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS



TIPS FOR VIRTUAL PRESS BOX  
ACCOUNT HOLDERS

OCTOBER 2011

Updated April 2013

# Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	2
USER RESPONSIBILITIES .....	2
RESOURCES .....	2
APPLICATION.....	3
ACCESSING CM/ECF .....	3
Maintaining e-mail information.....	4
Configuration Options.....	5
Adding Cases of Interest .....	6
WRITTEN OPINIONS.....	8
PACER.....	9

## INTRODUCTION

The United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts can issue read-only Electronic Case Filing (ECF) accounts (to be known as a Virtual Press Box or VPB) to members of the press with a Media ID issued by this court. This expanded access to the court's ECF system enables a reporter to receive e-mail notifications to their individual e-mail account when a document is filed in a case that he or she may choose to follow.

## USER RESPONSIBILITIES

In accordance with the Electronic Public Access Fee Schedule for the United States Courts, public access to court electronic records (PACER) fees will apply, currently at ten cents per page (with a maximum charge of \$3.00 per case-related document). All users shall agree to abide by all Court rules, orders, policies and procedures governing the use of the electronic case system and acknowledges that all PACER fees apply. Media members must protect the security of their login and password and immediately notify the court: (1) if they learn that their password has been compromised; or (2) upon resignation or transfer to a different place of employment.

CM/ECF users (including media account holders) are ordered not to disseminate the information contained in any notices or documents received in error, electronically or on paper – in particular, any notices or documents concerning a sealed matter. Such notices shall be deleted immediately from the recipient's e-mail. The recipient shall notify the clerk's office immediately. Any violation of this agreement shall be punishable as a contempt of court.

## RESOURCES

The court has a number of resources to assist the media in using the Virtual Press Box:

**United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts Media web page**

[www.mad.uscourts.gov/general/media.htm](http://www.mad.uscourts.gov/general/media.htm)

**CM/ECF Help Desk**

[ecfhelp@mad.uscourts.gov](mailto:ecfhelp@mad.uscourts.gov) or 866-239-6233

**US Courts PACER Service Center**

[www.pacer.gov](http://www.pacer.gov)

**Clerk's Office Liaison**

Nuvia Ball 617-748-9198 or [nuvia\\_ball@mad.uscourts.gov](mailto:nuvia_ball@mad.uscourts.gov)

## APPLICATION

Members of the media who have been approved for a Media ID issued by the United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts are eligible to apply for a read-only “Virtual Press Box (VPB).”

Original applications for VPB access should be signed and submitted in hard copy to the Office of the Clerk of Court, Attn: VPB Application, One Courthouse Way, Suite 2300, Boston, MA 02210.

The application is available on the court’s website at [www.mad.uscourts.gov/general/media.htm](http://www.mad.uscourts.gov/general/media.htm).

## ACCESSING CM/ECF

Once a login and password is issued, the account holder may go the court’s web site at [www.mad.uscourts.gov](http://www.mad.uscourts.gov), click on “Case Information” from the menu bar, then “Login” from the dropdown menu.



## CM/ECF Filer or PACER Login

### Notice

This is a **Restricted Web Site** for Official Court Business only. Unauthorized entry is prohibited and subject to prosecution under Title 18 of the U.S. Code and access attempts are logged.

### Instructions for filing:

Enter your CM/ECF filer login and password if you are electronically filing something with the court.

### If you received this login page as a result of a link from a Notice of Electronic Filing email:

Enter your CM/ECF filer login and password. The system prompts customers for a CM/ECF login and password when attempting to view certain types of

### If you have trouble viewing a document:

After successful entry of your CM/ECF login, you should be able to view the document. If you receive the message "You do not have permission to view this document" viewing the document is restricted to attorneys of record in the case and the system does not recognize you as such. If the login prompt appears again, after you have entered your CM/ECF login and password, it means that the "free look" link has expired. You will need to enter your PACER login and password to view

### Instructions for viewing filed documents and case information:

If you do not need filing capabilities, enter your PACER login and password. If you do not have a PACER login, you may register online at <http://pacer.uscourts.gov>

#### Authentication

Login:	<input type="text"/>
Password:	<input type="password"/>
client code:	<input type="text"/>
<input type="button" value="Login"/>	<input type="button" value="Reset"/>

**IMPORTANT NOTICE OF REDACTION RESPONSIBILITY:** All filers must redact: Social Security identification numbers; dates of birth; names of minor children; financial account numbers; and, in certain cases, home addresses, in compliance with [Fed. R. Civ. P. 5.2](#) or [Fed. R. Crim. P. 49.1](#). This requirement applies to all documents, including attachments.

I understand that, if I file, I must comply with the redaction rules. I have read this notice.

Enter a valid VPB account name in the login field, and the court generated password in the password field. Although VPB users will not be able to file documents, all users must check the box regarding the redaction rules to complete the login process.

NOTE: The "Lost Password?" function works only for attorneys admitted to the bar of this court. VPB account holders should contact the ECF help desk for assistance.

## Maintaining e-mail information

Users are responsible for maintaining e-mail information in the ECF system. Log into CM/ECF, click on "Utilities" on the blue menu bar, and then on "Maintain Your E-mail."

Email Information for Virginia Hurley	
Registered e-mail addresses	Configuration options
Primary e-mail address: <a href="mailto:genny_hurley@mad.uscourts.gov">genny_hurley@mad.uscourts.gov</a>	Select an e-mail address to configure.
Secondary e-mail addresses: <a href="#">add new e-mail address</a>	
<input type="button" value="Submit all changes"/>	<input type="button" value="Clear"/>

Click on the primary e-mail address:

Registered e-mail addresses	Configuration options
primary e-mail address: <a href="mailto:ginny_hurley@mad.uscourts.gov">ginny_hurley@mad.uscourts.gov</a>	<input type="text" value="ginny_hurley@mad.uscourts.gov"/>

To change the e-mail address, type over the current address. Remember to click on “Submit all changes” to complete the transaction.

## Configuration Options

The system permits users to customize how and when to receive e-mail notices. These questions appear below the user’s e-mail address:

Should this e-mail address receive notices? <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
How should notices be sent to this e-mail address? <input checked="" type="radio"/> Per Filing <input type="radio"/> Summary Report
In what format should notices be sent to this e-mail address? <input checked="" type="radio"/> HTML <input type="radio"/> Text
Should this e-mail address receive general announcement notices from this court? <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No

- Should this e-mail address receive notices?

The answer to this question should remain set at “Yes”

- How should notices be sent to this e-mail address?

“Per filing” will send an e-mail immediately after anything is entered on the docket;

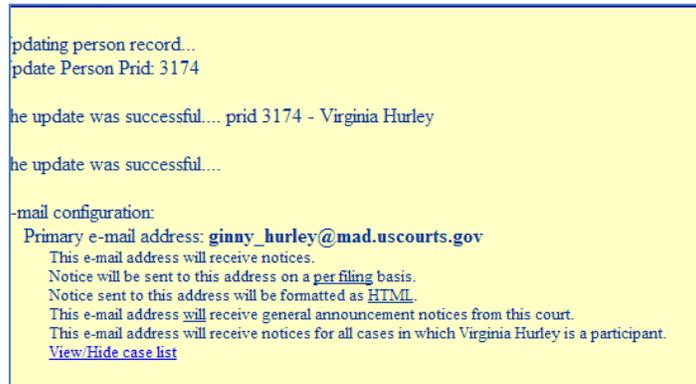
“Summary Report” will send one e-mail once a day (usually early in the morning) with a summary of all activity in any case identified in the user’s account.

NOTE: This option may be changed as the user’s needs change.

- In what format should notices be sent to this e-mail address?

This answer is determined by the user’s e-mail provider. Most e-mail providers use HTML.

Be sure to click on “Submit all changes” and wait until a report of the changes is displayed:



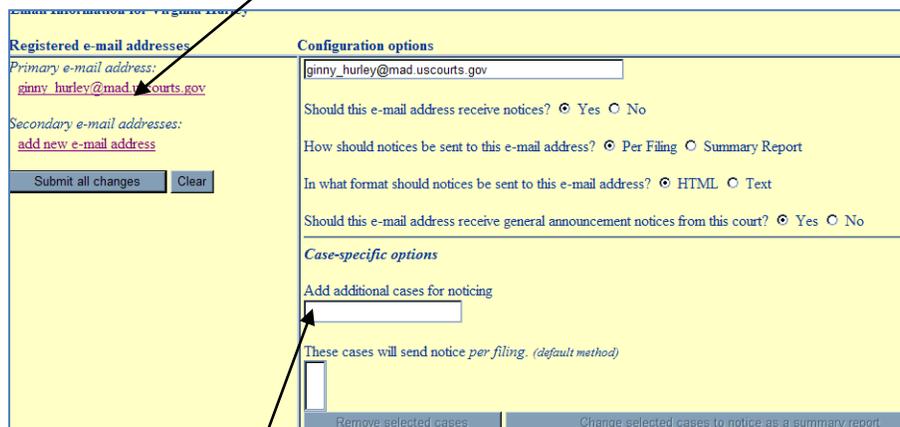
## Adding Cases of Interest

VPB account holders may add cases to their account that they choose to follow.

Once a case is added to the account, the account holder will receive a notice, via e-mail, for every entry made to that docket.

To do this, click on Utilities from the blue menu bar, then on “Maintain Your E-mail.”

Click on the primary e-mail address.



The system will respond by showing the user’s configuration options, and then “Case-specific options.” Type the docket number (without the assigned judge’s initials) in the field provided.

For example, type 09-10567 and then click on “Find This Case.” If a case type is not included, the system will respond with every case number that matches.

Valid case types are:

cr	criminal	cv	civil
mc	miscellaneous	mj	magistrate judge
md	multidistrict litigation		

*Case-specific options*

Add additional cases for noticing

09-10567

Select a case:

- 1:09-cr-10567-NMG USA v. James et al
- 1:09-cr-10567-NMG-1 Jesse James
- 1:09-cr-10567-NMG-2 Joseph Holliday
- 1:09-cv-10567-LTS Hodges et al v. Sun Resorts, Inc. et al

Select the docket number, or for a criminal case, the defendant(s) to be included. Click on “Add Case(s).” The docket number(s) selected will appear in the box below.

To change the case number to be noticed as part of a summary report, select the docket number(s) and then click on “Change selected cases to notice as a summary report.”

*These cases will send notice per filing. (default method)*

- 1:09-cr-10567-NMG-2 Joseph Holliday (interest)
- 1:09-cr-10567-NMG-1 Jesse James (interest)

---

*These cases will send notice as a summary report. (alternate method)*

Cases may be removed from the list by returning to this screen, selecting the docket number(s) from the list and then clicking on “Remove selected cases.” Remember to click on “Submit all changes” to complete the transaction.

## WRITTEN OPINIONS

Written opinions are defined by the Judicial Conference as “any document issued by a judge of the court sitting in that capacity that sets forth a reasoned explanation for a court’s decision.”

The Written Opinions Report may be found by clicking “Reports” from the blue menu bar in CM/ECF.

The screenshot shows a web-based search form titled "Written Opinions Report". The form includes several input fields and dropdown menus for filtering search results. The fields are: Case Number (text input), Last Name (text input), First Name (text input), Middle Name (text input), Office (dropdown menu with options Boston and Springfield), Nature of Suit (dropdown menu with options 0 (zero) and 110 (Insurance)), Case Type (dropdown menu with options Civil and Criminal), Cause (dropdown menu with options 0 (No cause code entered) and 02:0431 (02:431 Fed. Election...)), Case Flags (dropdown menu with options ADR and ADVISE), Filed between (two date inputs, one with 8/24/2011 and one with 9/23/2011), and radio buttons for Summary text and Full docket text (which is selected). At the bottom, there is a Sort by dropdown menu set to Case Number, and two buttons: Run Report and Clear.

Users may search by a variety of criteria: case number, party name, case type, cause of action or nature of suit. The nature of suit and cause of action apply only to civil cases. The nature of suit codes may be found on the “civil cover sheet” found on the court’s web site at <http://www.mad.uscourts.gov/resources/forms-local.htm>.

The “filed between” dates may be set for any date range, but the system only identifies written opinions issued on and after October 1, 2005.

There is no charge to view any document identified as a written opinion. However, PACER fees still apply to other case documents and docket sheets.

## PACER

Every VPB account holder must have access to a PACER account. PACER is the United States Courts' public access service that allows users to obtain case and docket information from federal appellate, district and bankruptcy courts, and the PACER Case Locator via the Internet.

The fee is currently 10 cents per page for documents. That fee is capped at \$3.00 for case-related documents. There is no fee charged to retrieve or view opinions of the court.

The PACER service center is available at <https://www.pacer.gov/psco/cgi-bin/regform.pl>.

Accessing a document or docket sheet from an e-mail notice will take the user directly to the PACER login page:



**PACER Login**

**Instructions**  
Enter your PACER login and password. If you do not have a PACER login and password, you can register for a PACER login and password, and would like to use your CM/ECF filer login and password, and would like to use your PACER login and password.

Make this my default PACER login  
After checking this box, you will only need to use your PACER login and password.

**Authentication**

Login:

Password:

Client code:

Login Clear