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Research Guide

Searching PACER (Public Access to Court Electronic Records)

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PACER: <http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov/>

SCOPE: This guide describes PACER (Public Access to Court Electronic Records), a pay-per-use collection of databases used for retrieving federal case docket information, as well as copies of federal court documents. PACER is a service of the United States Judiciary and operated by the Administrative Office of the United States Courts.

WHAT KIND OF INFORMATION CAN I FIND ON PACER?

For each federal case, you will be able to find:

- A list of all parties and participants, including judges, trustees, and attorneys;
- Case details, such as the nature of the case, causes of action, and dollar demand;
- A chronology of dates of case events, such as filings and hearings;
- Court opinions;
- Types of documents which have been filed;
- Case status;
- Links to actual case documents in many cases.

ACCESS

From SDCPLL

SDCPLL librarians can sign you into the PACER database and show you how to search for a particular case at no charge, except for the price of printing any chosen documents on library printers.

From Home

If you want to access PACER from home, you may obtain your own PACER login and password by completing a free registration process online. Once you are registered, you can retrieve your login and password on-line if you used a credit card, or they will be sent by mail to the address you provided on the registration form. For security reasons, logins and passwords are not e-mailed, faxed, or given over the phone. PACER will then bill you directly for your use of the service. The current price is \$.08 a page. For more information, see the PACER FAQ at <http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov/faq.html>. See the PACER website for document research/retrieval fees at <http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov/register.html>.

To login, click on US Party Case Index using either the link in the blue bar across the top of the screen or the link on the left hand side of the screen.

WHAT DATABASES CAN I ACCESS?

You have access to almost all of the Circuit Courts, Appellate Courts, and Bankruptcy Courts. Documents from the United States Supreme Court are not available through PACER. There are a few courts that cannot be searched. The current list is available at <https://pacer.uspci.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/crtmiss.pl?puid=01212708230>.

HOW DO I START A SEARCH?

When you are logged in you can select a database to search. If you do not know the court where the case was filed, you can choose the All Court Types and search all the different court databases. If you know the particular court (Bankruptcy, Civil, Criminal, or Appellate) you can select that court. To narrow your search, once you have selected a particular database, you can select a specific court or region such as 9th Circuit or California.

WHAT KIND OF INFORMATION DO I NEED TO PERFORM A SEARCH?

You will need to provide at least one of the following pieces of information to search the relevant database:

Court	Information Needed to Search
All Courts	Party first and last names
Bankruptcy	Case number, party name or social security number
Civil	Case number, party name or nature of suit
Criminal	Case number or defendant name
Appellate	Case number, party name or nature of suit

CAN I PRINT, EMAIL, OR SAVE PACER DOCUMENTS? If you are using PACER at the Law Library, you can:

1. Print documents here in the library for 20¢ per page,
2. E-mail your search results to yourself, or
3. Save them to a floppy disk or CD-ROM, which you can purchase for \$1 at the circulation desk. You may also save the information to a portable flash drive.