

## Filing a Third Party Complaint in CM/ECF

### Federal Rules of Civil Procedure – Rule 14

(a) WHEN A DEFENDING PARTY MAY BRING IN A THIRD PARTY.

(1) *Timing of the Summons and Complaint.* A defending party may, as third-party plaintiff, serve a summons and complaint on a nonparty who is or may be liable to it for all or part of the claim against it. But the third-party plaintiff must, by motion, obtain the court's leave if it files the third-party complaint more than 14 days after serving its original answer.

### Filing a Stand-Alone Third Party Complaint

Log into CM/ECF and click on the Complaints and Other Initial Documents category. Then, choose **Third Party Complaint**. See figure below.

The screenshot shows the CM/ECF web interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs for 'Civil', 'Criminal', 'Query', 'Reports', and 'Utilities'. Below this is the heading 'Complaints and Other Initiating Documents'. There is a search input field. Underneath, there are two main sections: 'Available Events (click to select an event)' and 'Selected Event'. The 'Available Events' list includes 'Amended Complaint', 'Amended Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus', 'Complaint (Attorney)', 'Complaint (Attorney-IFP ONLY)', and 'Third Party Complaint'. The 'Third Party Complaint' option is circled in red. The 'Selected Event' dropdown menu is set to 'Third Party Complaint', which is also circled in red. At the bottom left, there are 'Next' and 'Clear' buttons, with the 'Next' button circled in red.

**Note:** There is no fee to file a Third Party Complaint.

Enter the case number and click **Next**.

The screenshot shows the CM/ECF web interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs for 'Civil' and 'Criminal'. Below this is the heading 'Complaints and Other Initiating Documents'. There is a search input field labeled 'Civil Case Number or Numbers' which contains the text '2:20-cv-3'. Below the input field, there are 'Next' and 'Clear' buttons, with the 'Next' button circled in red.

## Filing a Third Party Complaint in CM/ECF

On the next screen choose the filer of the third party complaint. See figure below.

**Note:** CM/ECF will add the defendant as a Third Party Plaintiff after the Third Party Complaint is filed.

The screenshot shows the CM/ECF interface for filing a complaint. At the top, there is a blue header with the CM/ECF logo and navigation tabs for 'Civil', 'Criminal', and 'Query'. Below the header, the case title '2:20-cv-00003 MORGANS v. ASSET ACCEPTANCE, LLC' is displayed. The main area is titled 'Pick Filer' and is divided into two sections. On the left, there is a list of parties with 'Collapse All' and 'Expand All' links. The list includes 'ASSET ACCEPTANCE, LLC dft' and 'KELCY MARIE MORGANS pla'. On the right, there is a section titled 'Select the filer.' with a sub-section 'Select the Party:'. A dropdown menu is open, showing 'ASSET ACCEPTANCE, LLC [dft]' and 'MORGANS, KELCY MARIE [pla]'. The 'ASSET ACCEPTANCE, LLC [dft]' option is highlighted with a red circle. Below the dropdown, there are three buttons: 'Next' (circled in red), 'Clear', and 'New Filer'.

**Note:** For complete instructions on how to properly add a party please refer to the **Searching for a Party** section of the [Guide for Opening a Civil Case and Filing a Civil Complaint in CM/ECF](https://ecf.paed.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/ShowIndex.pl), found on the CM/ECF home page: <https://ecf.paed.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/ShowIndex.pl>

The next screen will prompt the filer to add the nonparty (now the third party defendant) that the third party complaint is being filed against. Choose **New Party**.

## Filing a Third Party Complaint in CM/ECF

Pick Party

Select from the following list the party(s) against whom you are filing this Third-Party Complaint.

Collpase All Expand All

ASSET ACCEPTANCE, LLC dft

KELCY MARIE MORGANS pla

Select the Party: OR Select a Group:

ASSET ACCEPTANCE, LLC [dft]

MORGANS, KELCY MARIE [pla]

No Group

All Defendants

All Plaintiffs

All Parties

Next Clear **New Party**

CM/ECF will then take you to the Search for a Party screen. Parties must be searched for and added in ALL CAPITAL LETTERS. Enter the party name exactly as it appears in the caption of the amended complaint, including punctuation.

Pick Party

Search for a party

Collpase All Expand All

ASSET ACCEPTANCE, LLC dft

KELCY MARIE MORGANS pla

Last / Business Name CREDIT CORP, USA First Name Middle Name

**Search**

If the search results display a party with same name double-click on the party. Do **NOT** pick that party if it is listed with address information. Instead, select **Create New Party**. If you find an exact match for the party you entered, and the party does not have address information, choose **Select Party**.

## Filing a Third Party Complaint in CM/ECF

CM/ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents  
2:20-cv-00003 MORGANS v. ASSET ACCEPTANCE, LLC

Pick Party

Search for a party

Last / Business Name CREDIT CORP. USA First Name Middle Name

Search

Search Results

Select Party Create New Party

Search returned no results. Please try again or create a new party.

After choosing **Create New Party** or **Select Party** you will be taken to the **Party Information** screen. Choose ThirdParty Defendant as the **Party Role**. Do not add address information or make any other changes on this screen. Click **Add Party** after choosing the Party Role.

CM/ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents  
2:20-cv-00003 MORGANS v. ASSET ACCEPTANCE, LLC

Pick Party

Party Information

Last name CREDIT CORP. USA First name

Middle name Generation

Title

Role ThirdParty Defendant (3pd.pty)

Pro se No

Prisoner Id Unit

Office

Address1

Address 2 Show this address on the docket sheet

Address 3 City

State Zip Country

Prison

Phone Fax

E-mail

Party text

Start date 3/25/2020 End date

Corporation no Notice yes

Add Party

## Filing a Third Party Complaint in CM/ECF

Repeat the process of adding a new party until the third party defendant(s) have been added. On the next screen CM/ECF will automatically select the newly added third party defendants.

The screenshot shows the 'Pick Party' screen in the CM/ECF system. The top navigation bar includes 'Civil', 'Criminal', 'Query', 'Reports', and 'Utilities'. The main heading is 'Complaints and Other Initiating Documents' for case '2:20-cv-00003 MORGANS v. ASSET ACCEPTANCE, LLC'. The 'Pick Party' section on the left lists 'ASSET ACCEPTANCE, LLC [dft]', 'KELCY MARIE MORGANS [pla]', and 'CREDIT CORP, USA [3pd]' with options for 'Alias', 'Corporate Parent or other affiliate', and 'Attorney'. The right section, titled 'Select from the following list the party(s) against whom you are filing this Third-Party Complaint.', has 'Select the Party:' and 'Select a Group:' options. The 'Next' button is circled in red.

On the next screen the filer will upload the Third Party Complaint. The Civil Cover Sheet and Designation Form forms should not accompany a third party complaint.

The screenshot shows the 'Main Document' upload screen. The 'Choose File' button is circled in red. Below the upload section is a table for attachments:

Attachments	Category	Description
I. Choose File No file chosen		

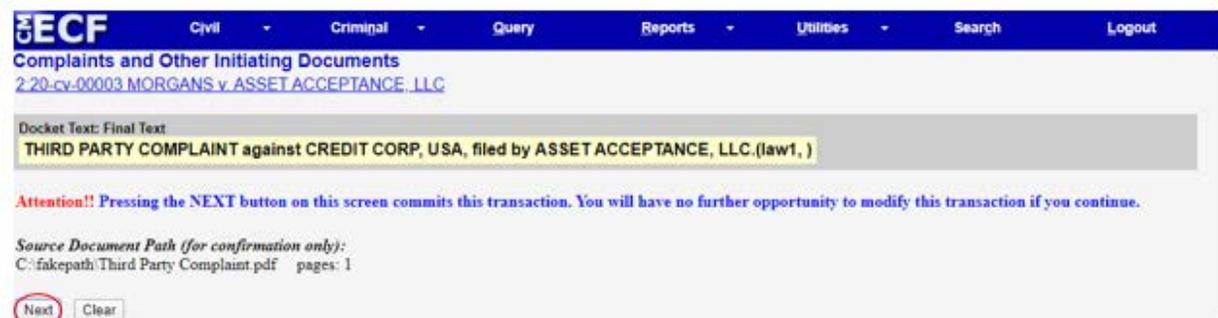
The 'Next' button is circled in red.

It is not necessary to add additional wording on the docket text screen.

The screenshot shows the 'Docket Text' screen. The text 'THIRD PARTY COMPLAINT' is entered in the docket text field. The 'Next' button is circled in red.

## Filing a Third Party Complaint in CM/ECF

Below is that last screen you will see before filing the third party complaint. Clicking **Next** will submit the third party complaint.



The screenshot shows the ECF interface with a blue header containing navigation links: Civil, Criminal, Query, Reports, Utilities, Search, and Logout. Below the header, the text reads "Complaints and Other Initiating Documents" followed by the case number "2:20-cv-00003 MORGANS v. ASSET ACCEPTANCE, LLC". A grey box contains the docket text: "Docket Text: Final Text" and "THIRD PARTY COMPLAINT against CREDIT CORP, USA, filed by ASSET ACCEPTANCE, LLC.(law1, )". A red warning message states: "Attention!! Pressing the NEXT button on this screen commits this transaction. You will have no further opportunity to modify this transaction if you continue." Below this, the source document path is shown: "Source Document Path (for confirmation only): C:\fakepath\Third Party Complaint.pdf pages: 1". At the bottom, there are two buttons: "Next" (circled in red) and "Clear".

ECF opens the Notice of Electronic Filing screen. The notice displays the case caption, case number, docket text and document number. The notice also displays the names of the persons who will be notified electronically and who will not be notified electronically.



The screenshot shows the "Notice of Electronic Filing" screen. The header is identical to the previous screenshot. The case caption "2:20-cv-00003 MORGANS v. ASSET ACCEPTANCE, LLC" is displayed. The court name "United States District Court Eastern District of Pennsylvania" is shown on the right. The section "Notice of Electronic Filing" contains the following information: "The following transaction was entered by law1, on 3/26/2020 at 10:34 AM EDT and filed on 3/26/2020". Case details include: "Case Name: MORGANS v. ASSET ACCEPTANCE, LLC", "Case Number: 2:20-cv-00003", "Filer: ASSET ACCEPTANCE, LLC", and "Document Number: 2". The docket text is "THIRD PARTY COMPLAINT against CREDIT CORP, USA, filed by ASSET ACCEPTANCE, LLC.(law1, )". A notice states: "2:20-cv-00003 Notice has been electronically mailed to: law1 ray\_gilchrist@paed.uscourts.gov". Another notice states: "2:20-cv-00003 Notice will not be electronically mailed to:". The section "The following document(s) are associated with this transaction:" includes: "Document description: Main Document", "Original filename: n/a", and "Electronic document Stamp: [STAMP dcecfStamp\_ID=1001600548 [Date=3/26/2020] [FileNumber=126441-0] [a57af4532aa9aa1d37bb75506b2810d4cd43c42b49e880880fa18d98b83688e133c911d8a4aa69547a2c38715328489abebad4e0469a02f8aacde1395e6c3298]]".

## Filing a Third Party Complaint in CM/ECF

### Filing a Third Party Complaint within an Answer to a Complaint

If an answer to a complaint is being filed, and contains a third party complaint, filers should use the **Answers to Complaints** event. This allows the answer to the complaint and the third party complaint to be filed simultaneously. The following screen will appear and a check mark should be placed in the third party complaint box. See figure below.

**CM/ECF** Civil Criminal Query

### Answers to Complaints

[2:20-cv-00003 MORGANS v. ASSET ACCEPTANCE, LLC](#)

Does this filing include a **counterclaim** ? (If yes, click on the box)

Does this filing include a **cross-claim** ? (If yes, click on the box)

Does this filing include a **third-party** complaint? (If yes, click on the box)

Answer

CM/ECF will take you to the **Search for a Party** screen, where the third party defendant(s) can be added.

**CM/ECF** Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities

### Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

[2:20-cv-00003 MORGANS v. ASSET ACCEPTANCE, LLC](#)

Pick Party

[Collapse All](#) [Expand All](#)

- ASSET ACCEPTANCE, LLC dft
- KELCY MARIE MORGANS pla

Select from the following list the party(s) against whom you are filing this Third-Party Complaint.

Select the Party: OR Select a Group:

ASSET ACCEPTANCE, LLC [dft]  
MORGANS, KELCY MARIE [pla]

No Group  
 All Defendants  
 All Plaintiffs  
 All Parties

After the third party defendant(s) are added the filer will continue the process of filing the answer to the complaint until they are taken to the Notice of Electronic Filing screen.

## Filing a Third Party Complaint in CM/ECF

### After the Third Party Complaint is filed

The Clerk's Office will review the pleading for accuracy and correct any errors. If necessary, and in accordance with the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, summons will be issued. If you encounter any issues during filing, please e-mail [PAED\\_clerksoffice@paed.uscourts.gov](mailto:PAED_clerksoffice@paed.uscourts.gov) for assistance.