



# CM/ECF Error: "Malformed" PDF

## How to Correct a "Malformed" PDF

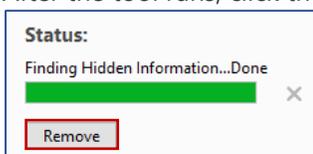
The steps below will guide you through fixing a document when you receive the following error:

*"Document is malformed or contains code which may cause an external action (such as launching an application). This PDF document cannot be accepted."*

## Windows

### Method 1 - Adobe Acrobat

1. Open the file in Adobe Acrobat
2. In the top left of the screen, click on **Tools**
3. Under the Protect & Standardize section, click on the **Protect** tool
4. At the top of the screen, click on **Remove Hidden Information**
5. After the tool runs, click the **Remove** button



6. Verify that the text in your PDF is still searchable
7. Save the file
8. Attempt to docket the file again in CM/ECF

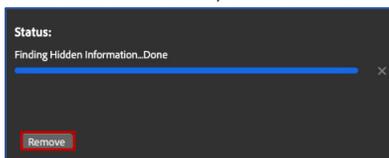
### Method 2 – Print to PDF

1. Open the file
2. Print the file
3. For the printer, choose either **Adobe PDF** or **Microsoft Print to PDF**
4. You should be prompted to save the file
5. Open the newly saved file and confirm that the text in the document is still searchable
6. Attempt to docket the file again in CM/ECF

## Mac

### Method 1 - Adobe Acrobat

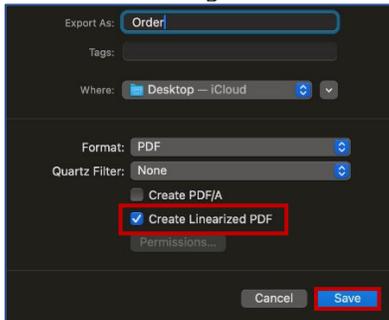
1. Open the file in Adobe Acrobat
2. Click on **All tools** in the top left-hand side of the window
3. Click on **Protect a PDF** in the tool list
4. In the pane that opens, click on **Remove hidden information**
5. After the tool runs, click the **Remove** button.



6. Verify that the text in the PDF is still searchable
7. Save the file
8. Attempt to docket the file again in CM/ECF

## Method 2 – Export to Linearized PDF

1. Open the file using the Preview app
2. Click on **File** and click **Export...**
3. On the save dialog box, click on the box for **Create a Linearized PDF**, and save the file

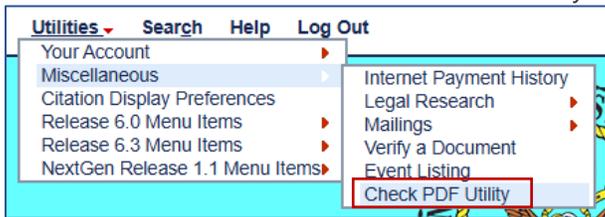


4. Open the file you saved in the previous step, and confirm the text is still searchable
5. Attempt to docket the file again in CM/ECF

## PDF Check Utility

CM/ECF has a utility that can test a PDF to ensure it meets the technical requirements prior to docketing.

1. Log into CM/ECF
2. Go to Utilities > Miscellaneous > Check PDF Utility



3. Upload the PDF and click **Next**
4. A message will display that lets you know if the PDF met all requirements

**The PDF document meets all CM/ECF requirements.**

*The PDF met the requirements.*

**The PDF document does not meet the following CM/ECF requirements:**

**The document contains code which may cause an external action (such as launching an application). This PDF document cannot be accepted.**

*The PDF did not meet the requirements.*