How to Flatten PDF Forms

May 13, 2020

When using a PDF fillable form, the user must lock or "flatten" the PDF document after completing the form fields to ensure the document can be viewed on all devices and to prevent others from manipulating or editing the information. The document filed and stored in CM/ECF cannot be altered once it has been filed, however, flattening the form will prevent any user from saving the document and editing the form fields.

The Chapter 13 Plan cannot be mailed to all parties through the Bankruptcy Noticing Center (BNC) if the document has not been flattened. If the Chapter 13 Plan is filed and has not been flattened, the case administrator may send a Notice of Incorrect Event to the filer instructing the filer to flatten the document and re-file it.

Follow the steps below to "flatten" a PDF fillable form:

1. Open fillable form and enter appropriate data.
2. Select **File**.
3. Select **Print**.
4. Select the **PDF printer**. (The Adobe PDF printer is installed automatically with Adobe Acrobat.)
5. Select **OK**
6. Specify location to save the "flattened" version of the form.
7. Select **Save**
8. File the "flattened" form in CM/ECF.