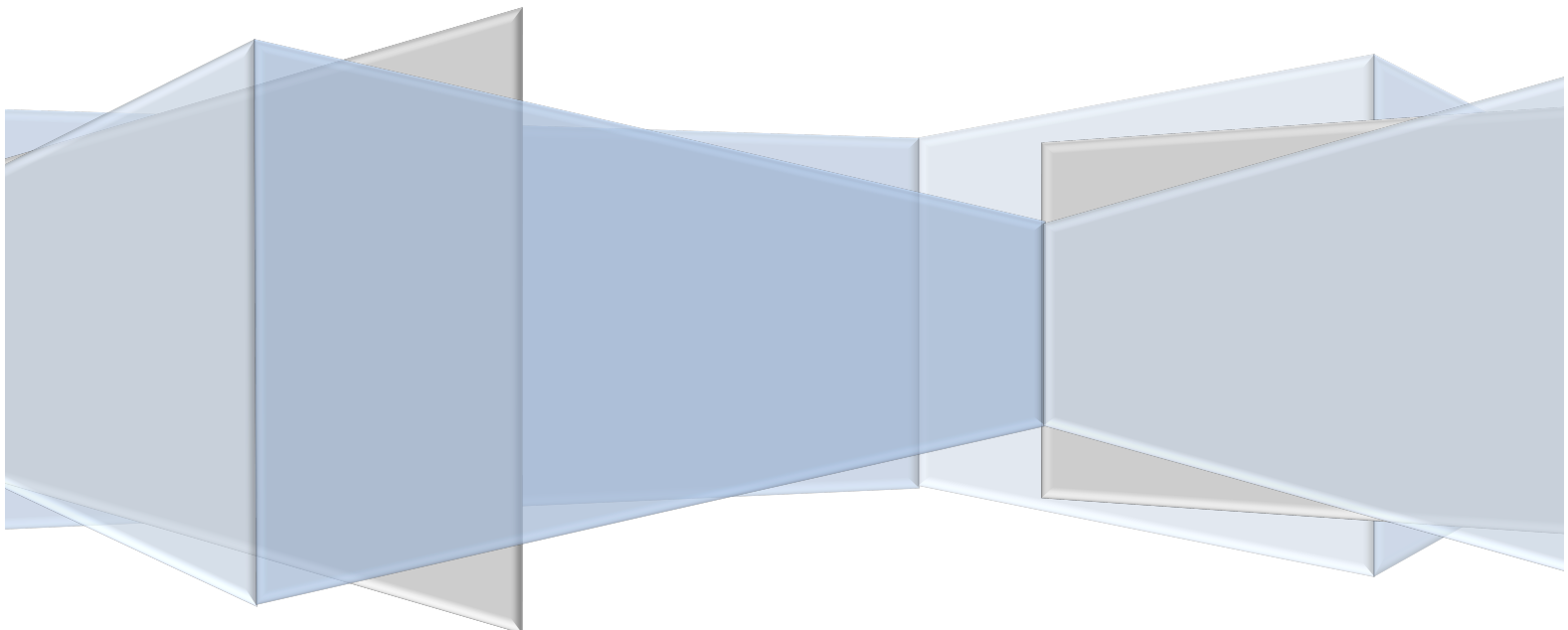**Nebraska State Court Administrator's Office**

Preparing documents for Judge Review (Flattening)

Adobe Acrobat XI Pro

Preparing Document for judge Review

Contents

Overview

When a signature, a stamp or anything typed is added to an original PDF document those additions are considered a layer. Most of the time you can even click-hold and drag it around the page or change the text. These layers remain loose on the document until a process is done called "Flattening". This flattening process makes all of these layers become a permanent part of the document.

When the clerk accepts an order off of e-filing the order immediately shows up on the "Register of Actions"(INQROA). Approximately one hour later, if required, JUSTICE pulls that image off of the register of actions and sends a copy of that image to the parties in the case that are required to get a copy. Then JUSTICE attaches a "Certificate of Service" to the image of the document and re-saves it to the register of actions. Now when someone looks at that document they will see the certificate of service attached to the document and they will know what parties got served.

When this process of adding the certificate of service is completed by JUSTICE, anything that was added to the original document(ie. Signatures, dates, stamps) will disappear unless they were originally flattened to the document before accepted through Clerks Review.

You may work with two types of documents. Documents that are already in a PDF format(through Judge Review(because the attorneys are required to file them as a PDF file already) and those that are in a format that was created by a word processor(you received it from an attorney via an email or you created it yourself using word processing software). Whichever format the document is in when you get it, it must end up in a PDF format and flattened to be able to electronically process it through Judge Review. Below are the instructions to sign and flatten documents in both of these situations.
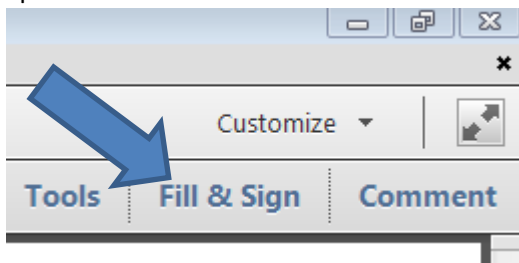
Creating and Adding a signature to a Document in PDF Format.

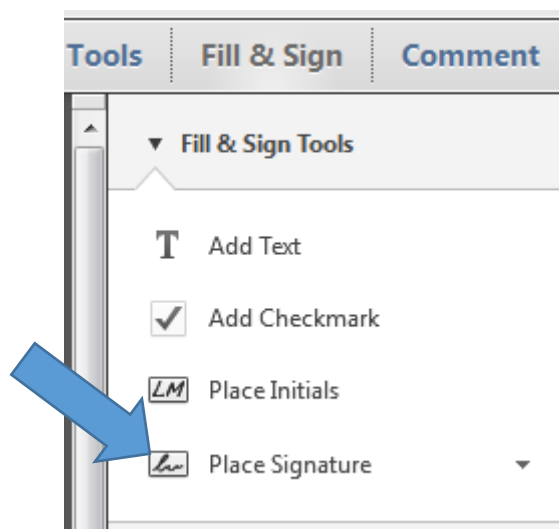1. First write your signature on a blank piece of paper until you get one that you like and make the signature about this size.

   Mike Prochn

2. Open a document in Adobe Pro and click the "Fill & Sign" button in the tool bar.
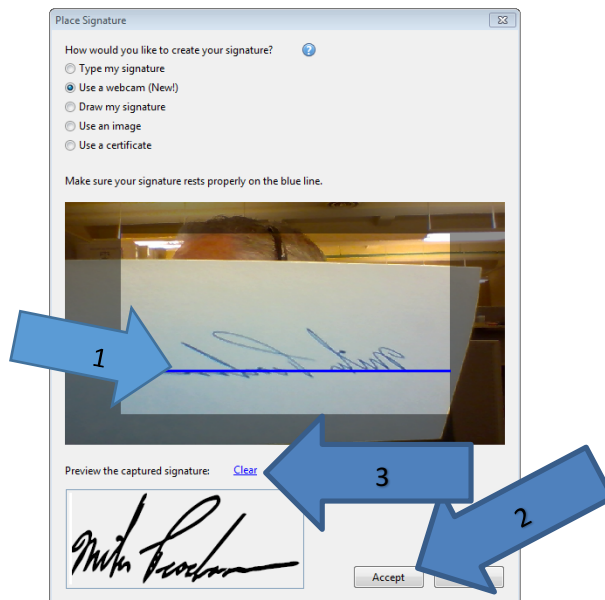
3. In the menu that opens below the Fill & Sign button, click on the "Place Signature" button. A window opens asking how you would like to create your signature.
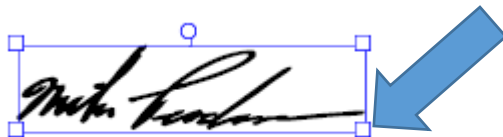
4. The easiest and best looking signature can be obtained by selecting, "use a webcam" if you have one. If you do have a webcam(built in to the laptops) then continue to #5, If not go to page #6 – Create a signature using a scanner.

5. Click the radio button in front of "use webcam"(1). The webcam will start up and you should see yourself in the background. Press the "Start webcam" button in the box covering the webcam image(2).
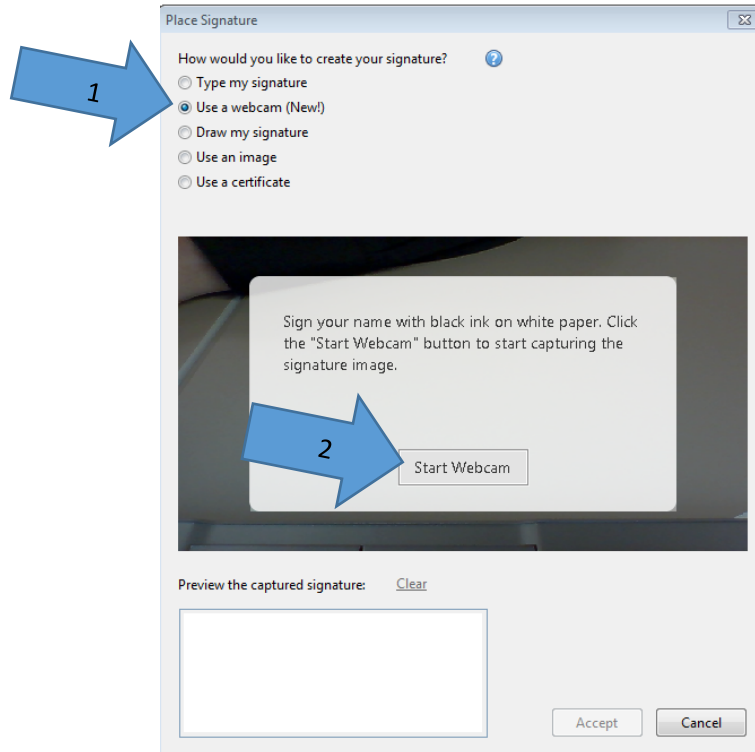
6. Hold the paper with your signature in front of the webcam so it lines up with the blue line going <u>through</u> the signature(not above)(1). When signature covers the blue line that is what triggers the program to take a picture of the signature. When it does you will see it appear in the box below webcam image. If it looks good then click the "accept button"(2). If you are not happy with it click the clear button(3) and repeat the process of holding the signature on the blue line.

7. Once you have clicked the "accept" button, a faint image of your signature follows your mouse pointer around the document. Just hover over the place on your document that you want your signature to be placed and press your left mouse button. You will see you signature now on the document with a blue box around it. You can left click-hold inside the box and drag the signature to the desired location. You can also Left click-hold one of the small boxes along the blue border and drag the box larger or smaller to make the signature the desired size. *Note – From now on when you open a document in Adobe Acrobat Pro, you just click on the "Place Signature" button in the "Fill & Sign" tools to bring your signature back to the mouse pointer for placement.

8. If you need to add anything to the document such as a date, go to the "Fill & Sign" tools again. Click the "Add Text" button. Just click on the document where you want to add text and type the desired text. Proceed to "**How to Flatten a Document Correctly**" section.
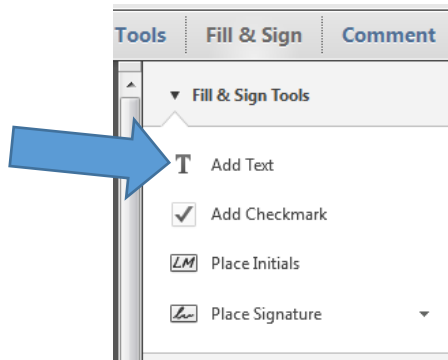
Create a Signature using a Scanner

1. You will need to scan the Piece of paper that has your signature on it and send it to your email or just open it on your computer. Then open the scanned document by double clicking it. If an Opening mail attachment window opens click "Open" to view it. Now click on the windows start button [icon], click "all Programs" then click on the "Accessories" folder and click on "Snipping Tool".
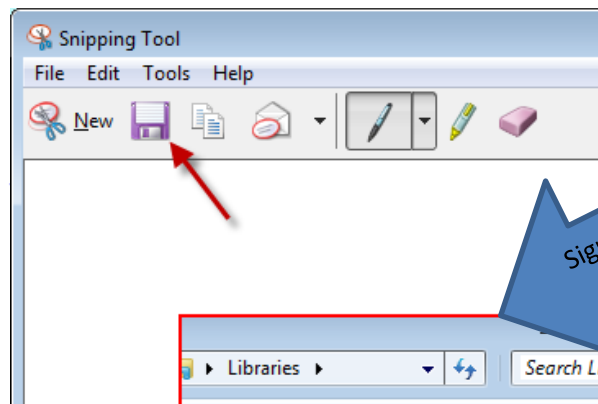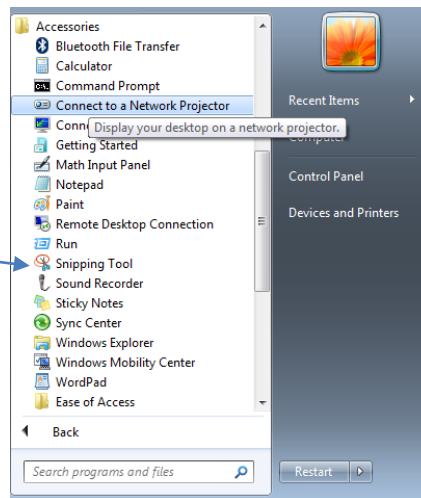

2. Your screen will become kind of faded looking. Put your mouse pointer slightly above and to the left of your signature. Now left-click and drag creating a red box around your signature, then let go of the mouse button. Your signature should be In a small snipping tool window now(like the one above). Click on the Save button(red arrow in above image). This will bring up a "Save As" window. Chang the "File name" to **Signature** and click on "Desktop" on the left-hand side of the window. Now click the "Save" button to save the image of your signature to you desktop.
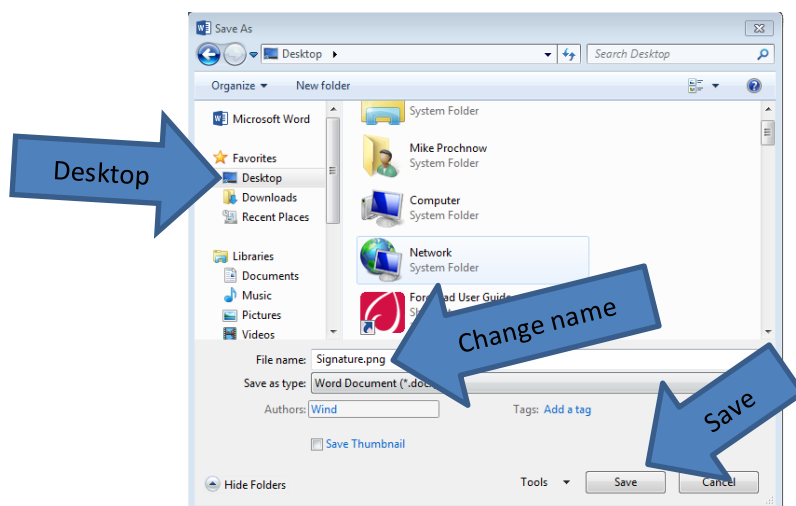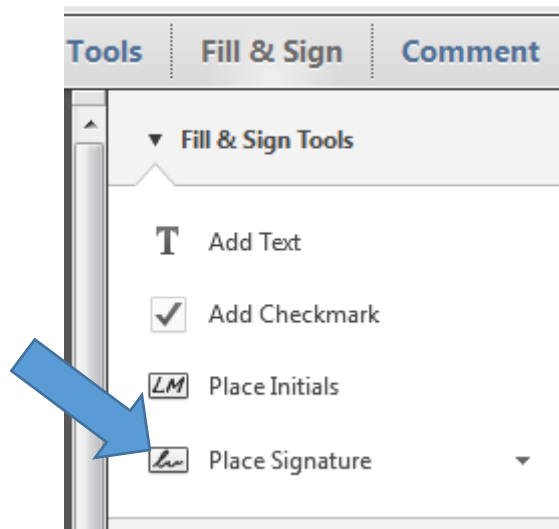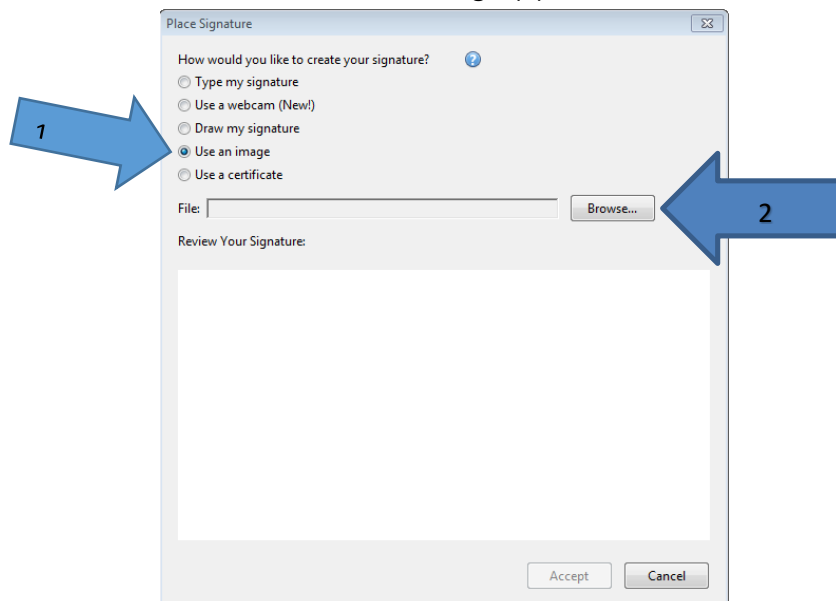
3. Open a document in Adobe Acrobat Pro XI and click the "Fill & Sign" button in the tool bar.
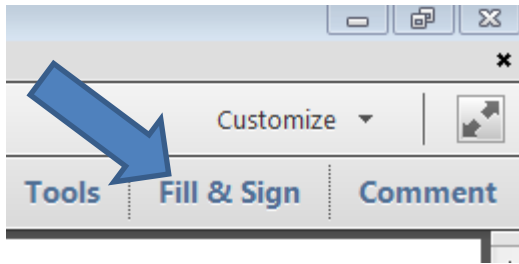

4. In the menu that opens below the "Fill & Sign" button, click on the "Place Signature" button. A window opens asking how you would like to create your signature.
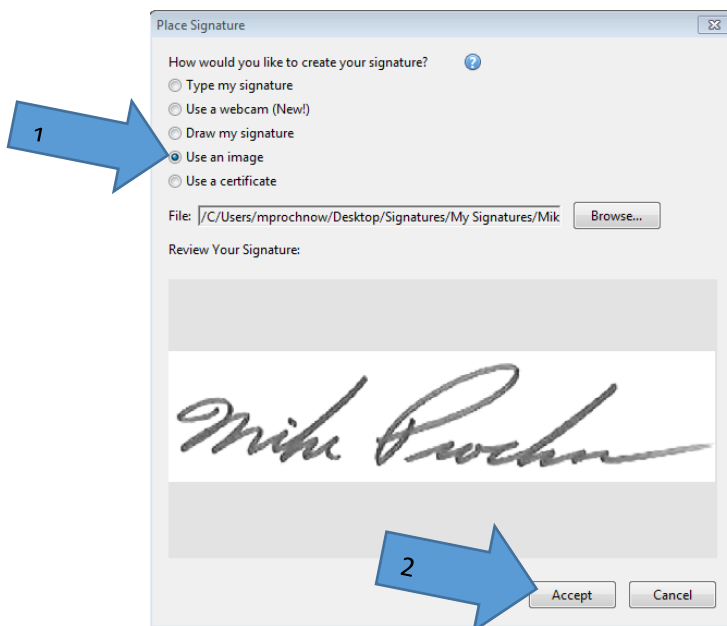

5. Click the radio button in front of "use an image"(1) and click the "Browse" button(2).
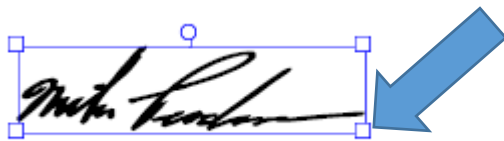
6. An "Open" window appears. Click on "Desktop"(1). Using the slider(2) locate the file that you renamed(Signature) earlier(3). Click on that file and click the "Open" button(4).
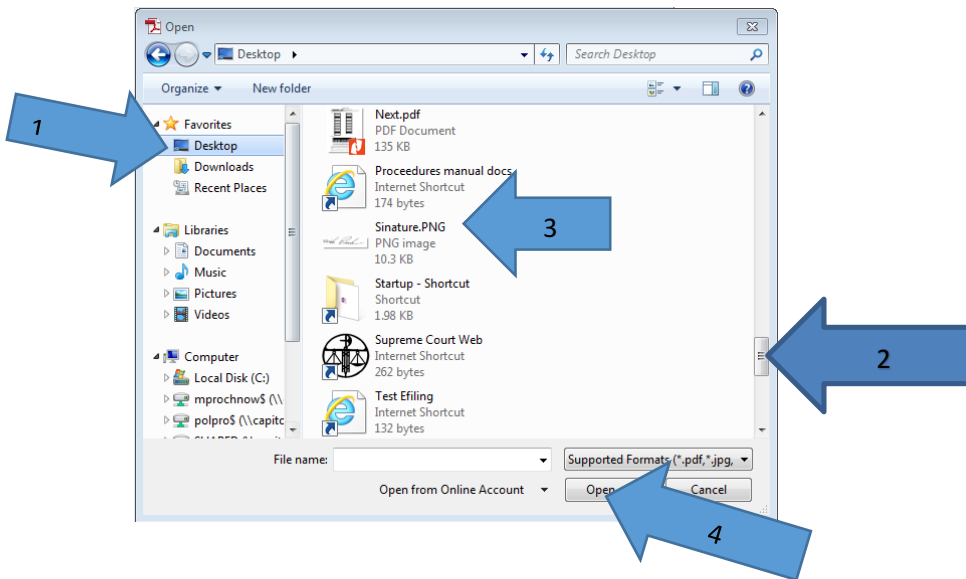

7. Your signature will now appear in the "Review you Signature" box(1). Click the "Accept" button(2).

8. Once you have clicked the "accept" button, a faint image of your signature follows your mouse pointer around the document. Just hover over the place on your document that you want your signature to be placed and press your left mouse button. You will see you signature now on the document with a blue box around it. You can left click-hold inside the box and drag the signature to the desired location. You can also Left click-hold one of the small boxes along the blue border and drag the box larger or smaller to make the signature the desired size. *Note – From now on when you open a document in Adobe Acrobat Pro, you just click on the "Place Signature" button in the "Fill & Sign" tools to bring your signature back to the mouse pointer for placement.


9. If you need to add anything to the document such as a date, go to the "Fill & Sign" tools again. Click the "Add Text" button. Just click on the document where you want to add text and type the desired text. Proceed to "**How to Flatten a Document Correctly"** section.
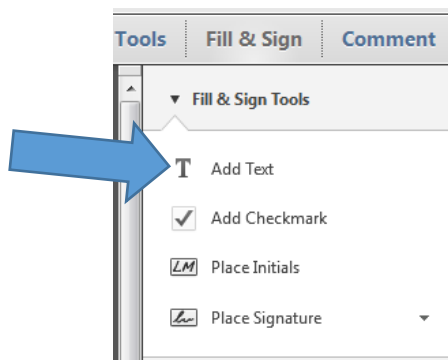
How to Flatten a Document Correctly

1. To flatten the document, click the "print preview and print" icon in the tool bar at the top of the page(1) or click on "File" in the upper left-hand corner(2) of the screen and click "Print"(3).
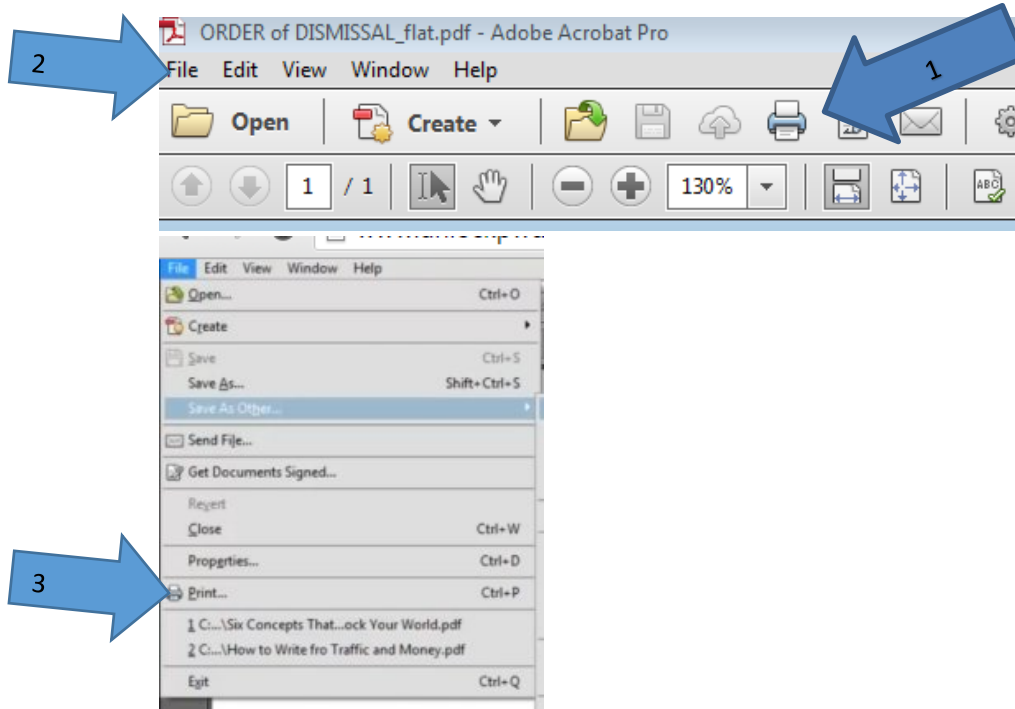
2. The "Print" window opens. In the "Printer:" field click on the pull down menu arrow on the right side of the field and click on "Adobe PDF"(1). Now click on the "Print" button at the bottom of the window(2).
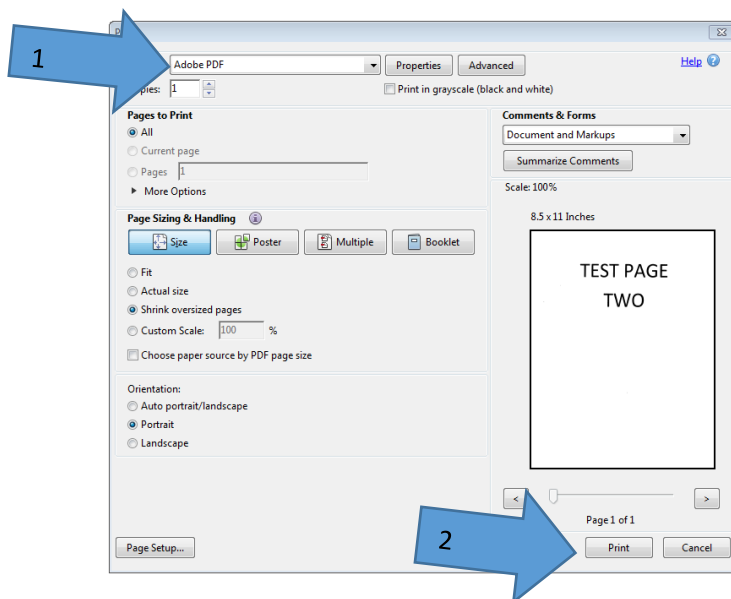
3. A "Save Adobe PDF File as" window opens. You do not have to change the file name, if you do not want an unsigned copy of this document. If you do want an unsigned copy of the document then I would suggest either putting the letter "F" or the word "flat" at the end of the file name so you know which document has been flattened. Now review the rest of the "Save As" window to make sure the document is being saved in the desired location. Then you will be able to retrieve it when you need to for the "Judge Review" screen. Click the "Save" button to complete the save. You are now finished and ready to send the document to the clerk through Judge Review.
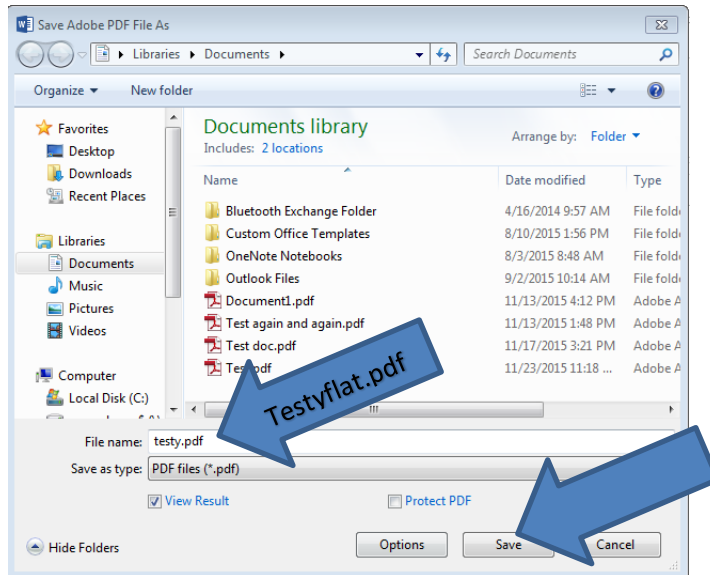
# Sign, Date and Flatten a Document Created in Microsoft Word

1. If you are using an up to date version of Adobe Acrobat Pro XI then there will be a handy "Acrobat" menu tab at the top of the screen. Click on the "Acrobat" menu tab at the top of the page(1) and click on "Create PDF" on the left-hand side of the menu(2).
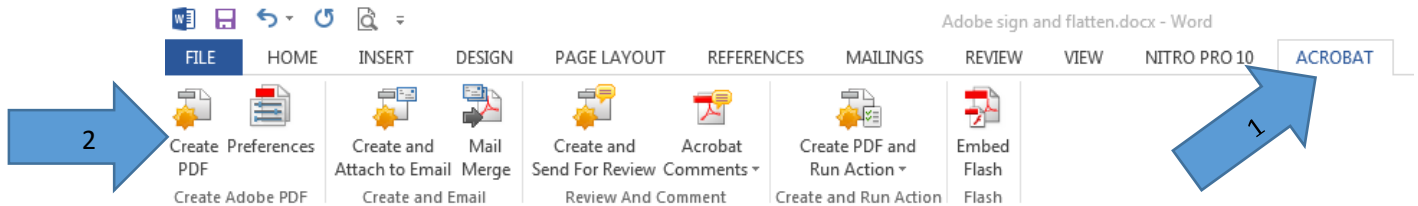

2. Then a small window will ask you if you want to save this document. If you want to keep an unsigned copy then click "YES", if you do not want to keep an unsigned copy then click "NO". If "yes" then a "save as" window will open. Enter the desired file name(1) and make sure it is saving to the desired location(2). Press "Save" to complete. If "no" then go to the next step.
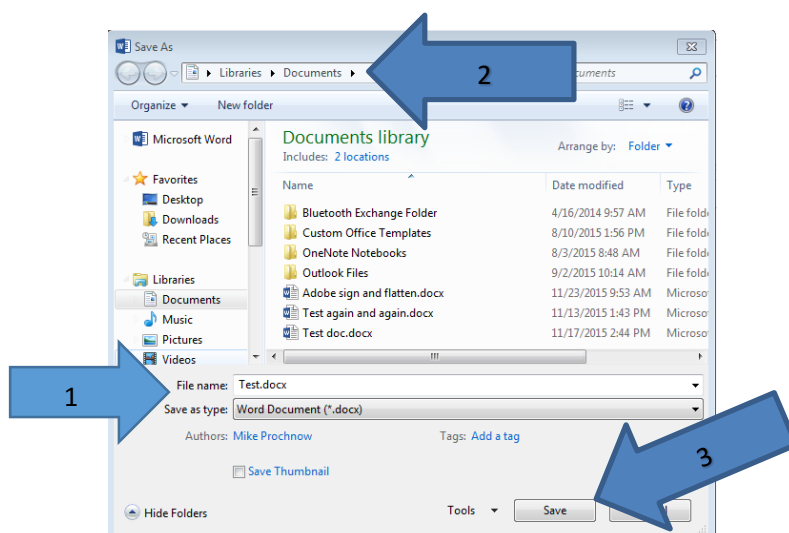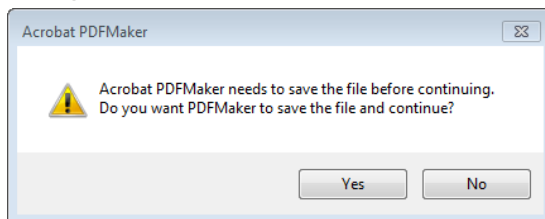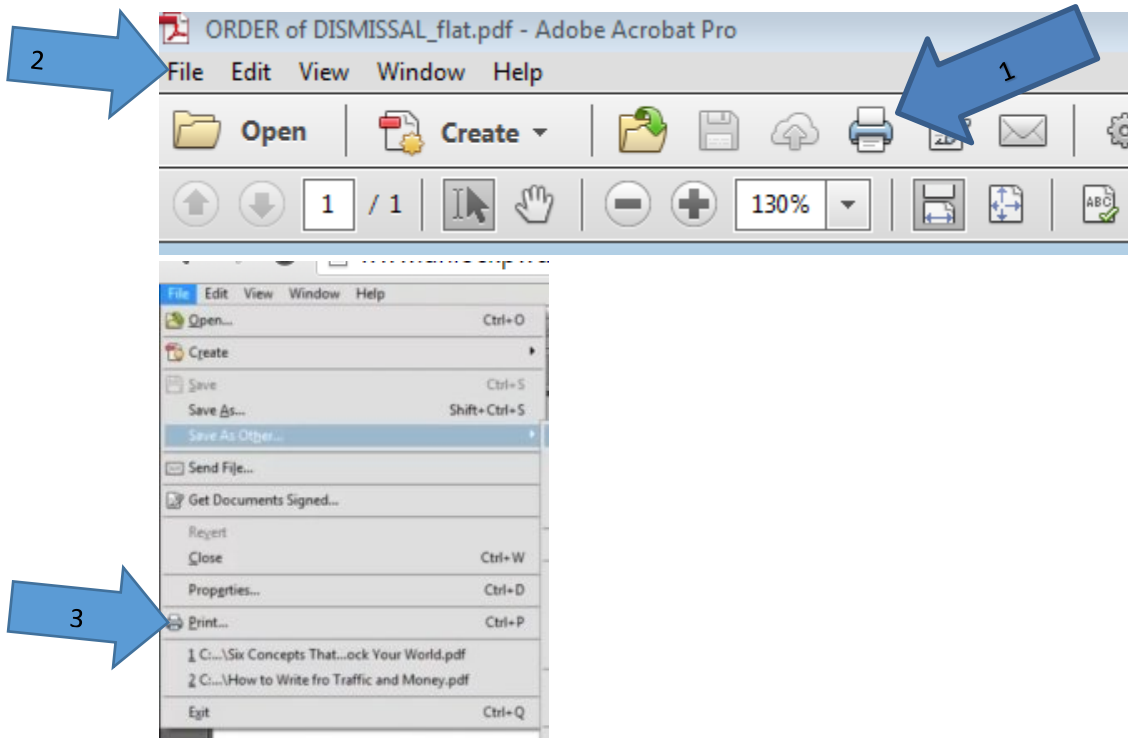
3. A "Save as Adobe PDF File As" window opens. This saves the document as a PDF document(.pdf) instead of a word document(.docx). Since these file extensions are different you do not need to change the file name of the document, but you can if you want to. Click "Save" to continue.
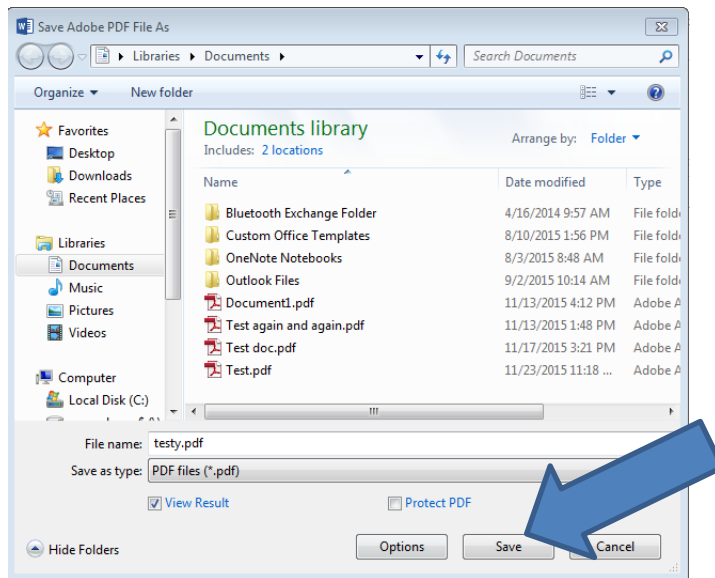

4. Now the document will open in an Adobe Acrobat pro window. If you have not already created your signature in Acrobat Pro then go to the section, "Creating and adding a signature"(steps 1-7). If you have already created your signature in Adobe Acrobat Pro then Click the "Fill & Sign" button in the tool bar(1). Click "Place Signature"(2) and place your signature in the desired location on the document by hovering with the mouse. Click the left mouse button to drop it into place.
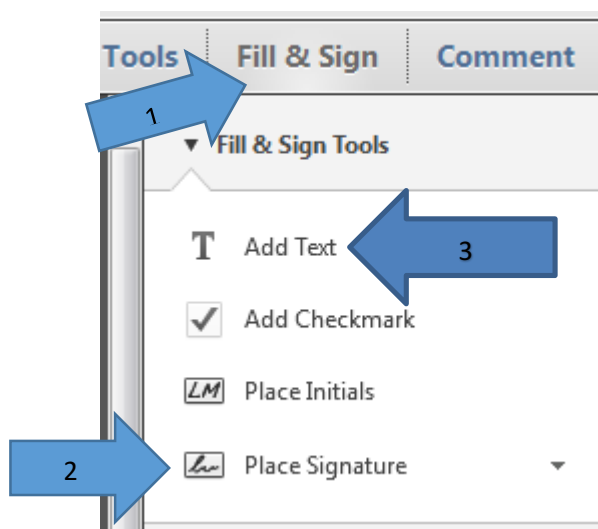
5. If you need to add anything to the document such as a date, go to the "Fill & Sign" tools again(see #1 in above image). Click the "Add Text" button(see #3 in above image). Just click on the document where you want to add text and type the desired test.

6. To flatten the document, click the printer icon in the tool bar at the top of the page(1) or click on "File" in the upper left-hand corner of the screen and click "Print"(3).

7. The "Print" window opens. In the "Printer:" field click on the pull down menu arrow on the right side of the field(1) and click on "Adobe PDF"(2) and click on the "Print " button at the bottom of the window(3).
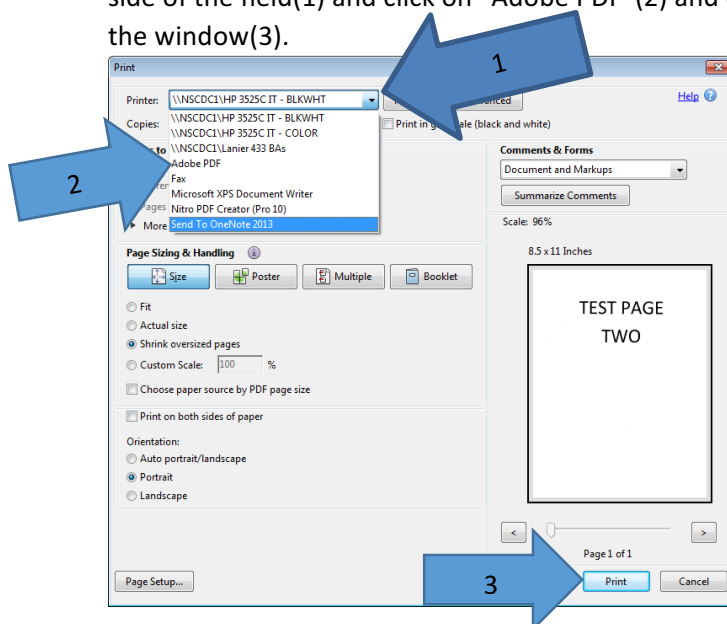
8. A "Save PDF File as" window opens. You do not have to change the file name, if you do not want an unsigned copy of this document. If you do want an unsigned copy of the document then I would suggest either putting the letter "F" or the word "flat" at the end of the file name so you know which document has been flattened. Now review the rest of the "Save As" window to make sure the document is being saved in the desired location. Then you will be able to retrieve it when you need to in the "Judge Review" screen. Click the "Save" button to complete the save. You are now finished and ready to send the flattened document to the clerk through Judge Review.
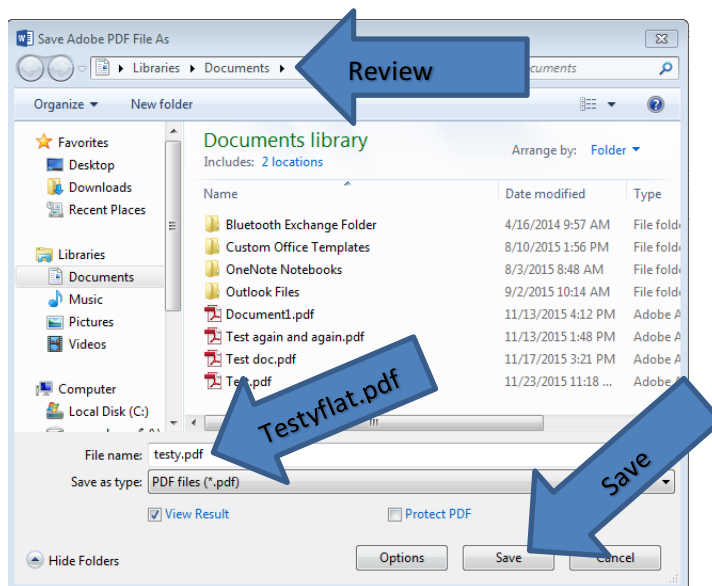
Summary(quick outline)

1. Save document in .PDF format.
2. Open the document in Adobe Acrobat Pro XI.
3. Add signature and date if needed("Fill & Sign" then "place signature").
4. Print to Adobe PDF(save document so you know it's been flattened using "f" or "flat" at end of file name and remember where you saved it).