

TOP TIP SERIES

FLATTENING A PDF FILLABLE FORM

In both Federal and State electronic filing systems, 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 other users from manipulating or editing the information. Submitting a document to the court without flattening could lead to a filing rejection.

The tried and true method of flattening a document is to print to PDF, which removes all layers of the PDF except the primary image. [Click here](#) for a step-by-step for flattening by this method.

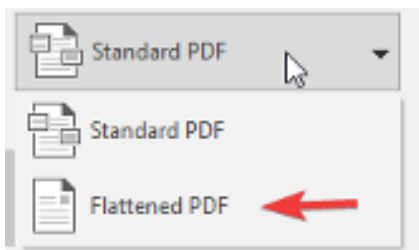
Unfortunately, the print to PDF method also removes some information you might want to preserve, such as OCR text. Since OCR (searchable text) is a requirement in most courts, you can use a more precise method of flattening that doesn't strip away wanted layers.

How to 'Flatten' in Adobe Acrobat Pro DC

1. Go to "Tools" tab.
2. Go to "Print Production" app.
3. Click on the "Preflight" option.
4. Search for the fixup "Flatten annotations and form fields".
5. Run the profile by pressing "Analyze and Fix" button.

How to 'Flatten' in Nitro Pro

Simply select Flattened PDF from the "Save As" menu.



Bonus Tip: If a document is created in Microsoft Word and redacted in Microsoft Word, it is possible to view the redacted words after that document has been converted to a PDF document. To prevent the disclosure of redacted text, users must redact in Adobe, not Microsoft Word.