

REMOVING METADATA

Lawyers and staff can remove metadata—hidden data in electronic files—using a variety of methods. Several methods are included below.

Corel WordPerfect – All recent versions

WordPerfect gives the user the option to save a document without metadata. To save a file without metadata, select **File**, then **Save Without Metadata**. A dialog box appears, and you can then choose to remove some or all of the metadata listed by checking the applicable boxes. Click **Save** to create a new WordPerfect document without the chosen metadata. WordPerfect then creates a new file with an **mtd** extension and preserves the original WordPerfect document.

Microsoft Word 2016 and Word for Office 365

These instructions are for Microsoft Word 2016 and Word for Office 365, but the steps described may be helpful in removing metadata from other versions of Word as well.

It may not always be possible to restore removed metadata in Word. As a result, consider whether you need to create a copy of your document first, and then remove metadata from the copy (preserving the original).

To Create a Copy of Your Original Document:

1. With your Word document open, click the **File** tab.
2. Select **Save As**. The Save As dialog box will appear.
3. Select a folder location to save a copy of your document. (**Browse** to find and select the appropriate folder, if needed.)
4. In the **File name** field, type a name for the copy of your document.
5. Click **Save**.

To Remove Metadata from a Copy of Your Document:

1. With a copy of your Word document open, click the **File** tab.
2. Click **Info**.
3. Click **Check for Issues**, and then select **Inspect Document**. The Document Inspector dialog box will appear.
4. Remove some or all of the metadata listed by checking the applicable boxes.
5. Click **Inspect**.
6. Review the inspection results listed.
7. Click **Remove All** next to any metadata found that you want removed. **Close** the dialog box when finished.
8. **Save** your changes.

Adobe Acrobat Pro DC

Adobe offers various tools to remove information from your PDF documents. Use the **Redact** tool to remove or redact visible information in the PDF that you do not want shared. Visit the Adobe website for information and step-by-step instructions for [redacting sensitive content](#).

To Remove Metadata from a PDF:

1. With the document open in Adobe, click on the **Edit** tab.
2. Select **Preferences** at the bottom of the menu.
3. A new menu should appear. Under the Categories list on the left side, select **Documents** if not already selected.

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4. Under **Hidden Information**, you will see a few options for when to remove the metadata. You can select the option to remove when closing the document to ensure your current version has no metadata.
5. When you close the document, Adobe will prompt you to confirm to remove the metadata. Note that this is a setting within Adobe, so you will need to remove or change the setting if you do not want this dialogue box to appear with every pdf

Third Party Metadata Removal

Several third-party products are also available to remove hidden data in electronic documents. Some examples include, [BigHand Metadata Management](#), [BEC Legal Systems MetaReveal](#), and [Objective Redact](#).

Print to PDF

To create a PDF without metadata, print your document to a PDF printer. If you have any PDF program installed on your computer, your printer list will include a PDF printer. The print to PDF method “flattens” the PDF document, removing any content not visible on the screen. No metadata is saved. (This process is different from using the “Save as Adobe PDF” feature.)

To Print to a PDF Printer:

1. With your document open, click the **File** tab.
2. Click **Print**.
3. Select the **PDF printer** (i.e. Adobe PDF).
4. Click **Print**. The Save PDF File As dialog box will appear.
5. In the **File name** field, type a name for your PDF. (Before you click Save, confirm the folder location of your PDF.)
6. Click **Save**.

For information on the ethical implications of disclosing metadata, review [Oregon Formal Opinion 2011-187](#).

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