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Patent Center

DOCX Filing

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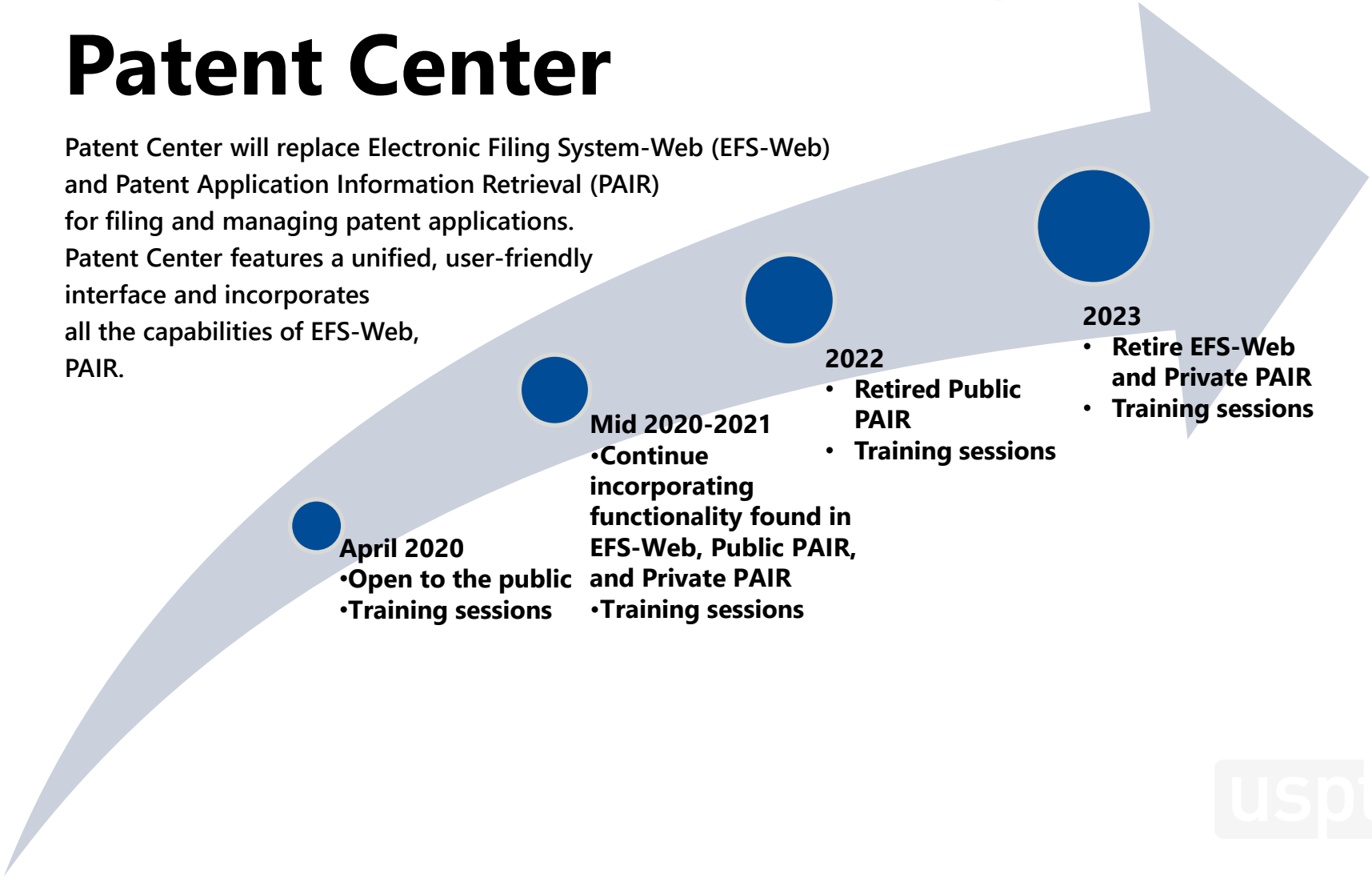
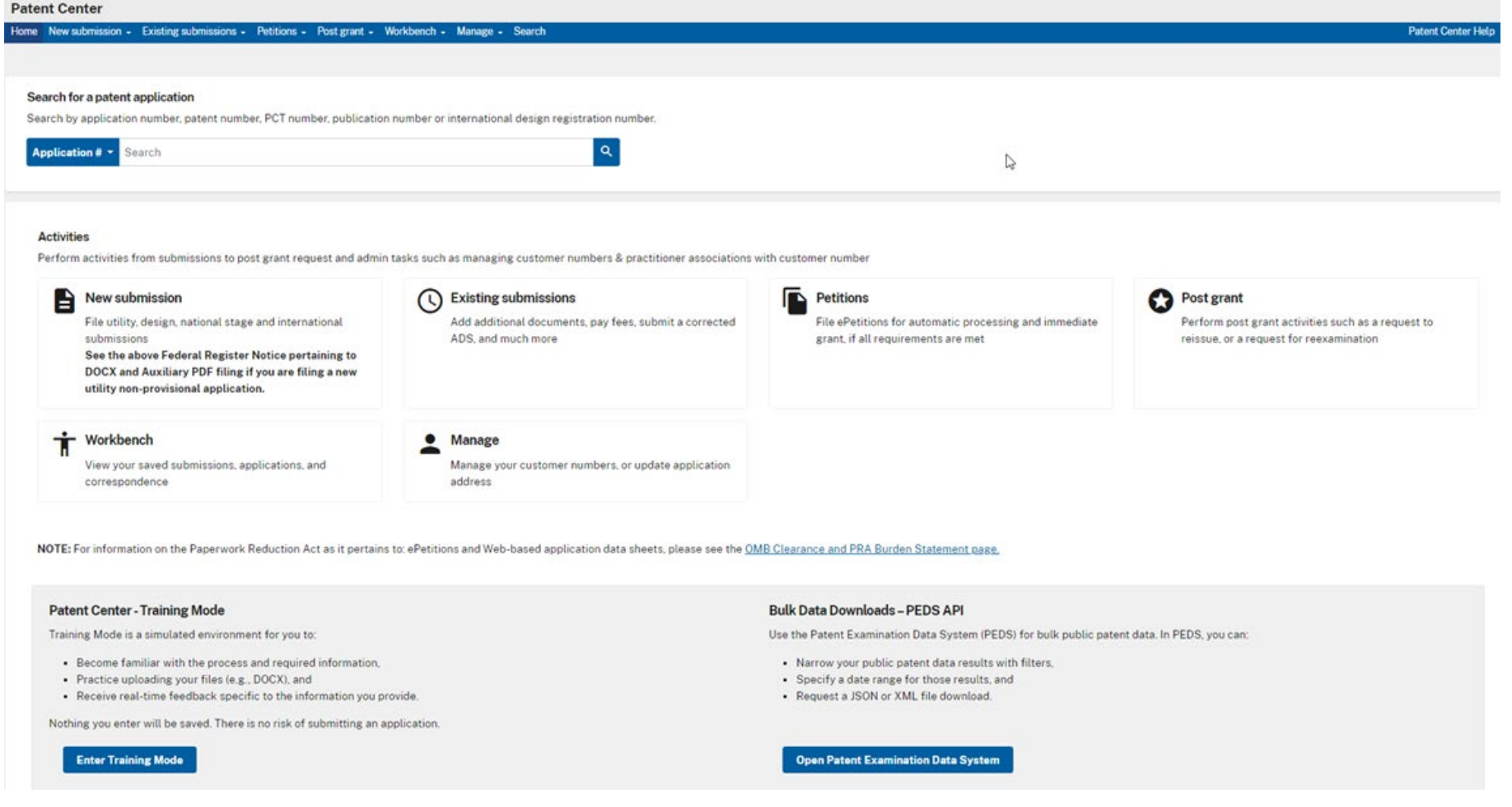
Patent Center

Patent Center will replace Electronic Filing System-Web (EFS-Web) and Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) for filing and managing patent applications. Patent Center features a unified, user-friendly interface and incorporates all the capabilities of EFS-Web, PAIR.



Patent Center (cont.)



DOCX Filing

- USPTO is switching to DOCX for application filings
- Part of ongoing initiatives to leverage the most advanced technology and to issue and maintain robust and reliable patents
- Use of DOCX is foundational to future efforts and functionality

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DOCX submissions

- **DOCX is a word processing file format based on open standards, including Extensible Markup Language (XML)**
- **DOCX is supported by most popular word-processing applications**
  - Microsoft Word, Google Docs, LibreOffice, and Pages
  - Typically what is used to generate the PDF currently used to file applications
- **The USPTO began accepting structured text (DOCX) in August 2017**
- **Additional features and enhancements are being developed for structured text filing within Patent Center to further enhance user experience**

What can be filed in DOCX?

- **Applicable to following application types**
  - Utility non-provisional under 35 USC 111(a)
    - Includes Continuations and Divisionals
    - Includes amendments and responses
  - Utility provisional under 35 USC 111(b)
  - National Stage under 35 USC 371
    - Includes amendments and responses

Patent Center DOCX functionality

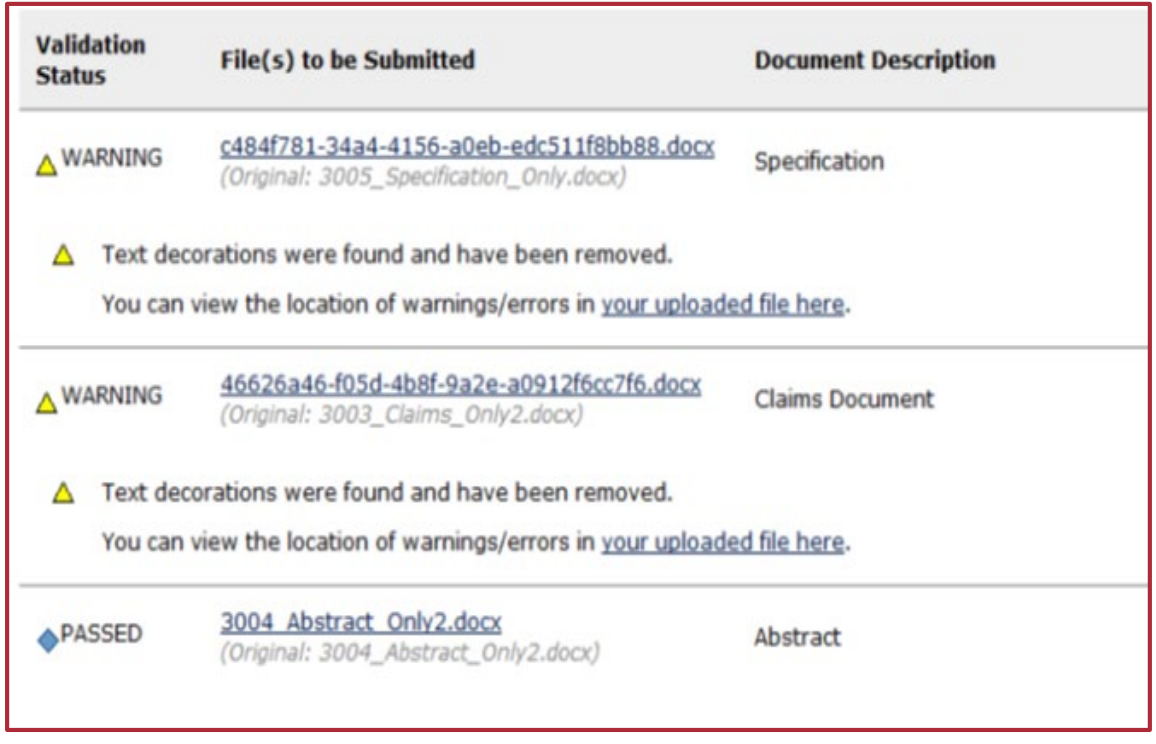
- **User friendly interface for submitting DOCX files**
  - Drag and drop for document upload
  - Requirement to convert DOCX into PDF for filing is eliminated
  - Automatic metadata detection and scrubbing (e.g., comments, etc.)
- **Automatic splitting of specification, claims, and abstract found within documents**
- **Provides content-based validations including**
  - Specification paragraph number detection
  - Independent and dependent claim count
  - Duplicate or missing claim number detection
  - Improper multiple claim dependency
  - Abstract word count
- **Automated document code assignments for DOCX files**

DOCX benefits

- Eliminates need to convert documents to PDF, reducing likelihood of conversion errors
- Ability to validate files prior to submission, reducing time spent addressing formalities
- Reduces likelihood of OCR errors from converting PDF documents for publication purposes

Application Quality Checks

- USPTO has developed checks that detect common errors, such as formatting errors
- Instant feedback pre-submission to prevent unnecessary delays in processing your application
- Warnings and errors are pinpointed in a copy of the uploaded document in real time
- Eliminates the non-embedded font error, the most common error in uploading a PDF



Validation Status	File(s) to be Submitted	Document Description
△ WARNING	c484f781-34a4-4156-a0eb-edc511f8bb88.docx *(Original: 3005_Specification_Only.docx)*	Specification
	△ Text decorations were found and have been removed. You can view the location of warnings/errors in your uploaded file here.	
△ WARNING	46626a46-f05d-4b8f-9a2e-a0912f6cc7f6.docx *(Original: 3003_Claims_Only2.docx)*	Claims Document
	△ Text decorations were found and have been removed. You can view the location of warnings/errors in your uploaded file here.	
◆ PASSED	3004_Abstract_Only2.docx *(Original: 3004_Abstract_Only2.docx)*	Abstract

◆ No Error(s) △ Warning(s) ▼ Error(s) found

Non-DOCX surcharge

- Starting January 17, 2024, a surcharge up to $400 will apply when filing a new non-provisional utility application* in PDF format

  * Applies to the specification, claims, and abstract when filed in PDF format. Please Visit the Summary of Final Patent Fee Rules

- Drawings are accepted in DOCX format but may still be submitted in PDF format with no surcharge
- Surcharge does not apply to the following application types – provisional, national stage, design, plant, and PCT applications

Auxiliary PDF

- **Applicants have the option to submit a PDF document of their application along with their DOCX document in Patent Center**
  - Applies to utility non-provisional applications (until further notice)
- **This initiative will allow more time for applicants to acclimate to DOCX filing and for the USPTO to receive any feedback on issues with the DOCX to PDF conversion process**
- **Applicants will still rely on the DOCX version as the source or evidentiary copy**
  - May also rely on the auxiliary PDF to support a request to correct an error or discrepancy
- **Applicants should contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) if they experience any issues with filing applications in DOCX format**

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