

E-Filing Frequently Asked Questions

1) What case types are categorized under mandatory e-filing?

Currently all case types including sub-categories of unlawful detainers, small claims, civil harassment restraining orders and civil appeals must be e-filed if a party is represented by an attorney. Probate, mental health, adoptions and family law cases can be e-filed beginning September 5 and will become mandatory beginning October 23, 2023.

2) Is e-filing mandatory?

Self-represented litigants are not required to file documents electronically; however, they are encouraged to do so. Litigants represented by attorneys must e-file in all civil cases except probate, mental health, adoption, and family law.

Probate, mental health, adoption and family law will have mandatory e-filing for litigants represented by attorneys beginning October 23, 2023.

3) How does e-filing work?

Electronic filing of court documents occurs through an Electronic Filing Service Provider (EFSP). A user must create an account with the certified EFSP of their choice and the EFSP manages the flow of documents and fees into the Court's eCourt system. Visit the [E-filing Service Providers](#) webpage for a current list of certified EFSPs to choose from.

4) What documents are exempt from e-filing?

Each case type has a different list of documents that cannot be e-filed. For a full list of exempt documents, please visit the following rules:

Civil Cases – [Local Rule 3.27\(d\)](#)

Probate – [Local Rule 7.2\(e\)](#)

Family Law – [Local Rule 5.12\(e\)](#)

Adoption - [Local Rule 5.12\(e\)](#)

Mental Health – [Local Rule 6.3\(e\)](#)

5) How do I submit documents that are exempt from e-filing?

Documents exempt from e-filing must be submitted conventionally, that is, in-person at the Clerk's Office, by drop box or by mail. Office hours are Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. excluding holidays. Visit our [Locations](#) page for courthouse addresses and current Clerk's Office hours.

6) Is e-filing the same as fax filing?

No. E-filing is a new process that sends documents directly into the court's filing database. It requires the use of a third-party electronic filing service provider (EFSP) to submit the documents to the court via the internet. Fax filing is no longer available for most civil cases. Beginning August 31, 2023, fax filing will not be available for all civil cases including family law, probate, adoptions and mental health.

7) Will fax filing be available after e-filing is implemented?

Fax filing is no longer available for civil cases. The final day for fax filing for probate, family law, adoptions and mental health will be at Noon on Thursday, August 31, 2023.

8) How do I e-file?

You must choose an Electronic Filing Service Provider (EFSP). These providers are third-party businesses which require you to create an account and then take you through the steps necessary to e-file.

9) Which electronic service provider (EFSP) can I use to e-file?

You may use any EFSP that is listed on the Court's [E-filing Service Provider](#) webpage.

10) Do I have to use an EFSP?

Yes. All courts accepting e-filed documents are mandated to use independent EFSP's in accordance with CRC 2.259(e).

11) Can I change my electronic filing service provider (EFSP) after I have chosen, used and registered with one?

Yes. You may choose to change your EFSP at any time.

12) Can I use my personal computer to e-file?

Yes. You may use your personal computer to submit filings. But you must use an electronic filing service provider (EFSP). A list of approved EFSPs can be found on the Court's [E-filing Service Provider](#) webpage.

13) Is there a cost to e-file?

Yes, unless you have a fee waiver. The Court's e-filing transaction fee and the EFSP's service fee are collected by the EFSP when the filing is submitted.

14) Do court-appointed attorneys have to e-file and pay the convenience fee for electronic filing?

Yes. Absent a fee waiver, all fees are applicable.

15) Can a legal service provider e-file on behalf of a client?

Self-represented parties have the option to e-file, it is not mandatory. The system does not prevent a legal service provider from submitting filings on behalf of a client. Whoever registers as the party e-filing documents will be the party that receives confirmations, notifications, and copies back from the court.

16) Can I e-file a complaint or petition with a fee waiver application?

Yes, the initiating document and fee waiver application will be processed at the same time. These documents may be submitted in the same transaction.

17) Are e-filing fees recoverable?

Fees may be recoverable pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure Section 1033.5

18) Are electronic filing service providers limited in the amount of fees they may charge?

The fees charged by an EFSP must be reasonable and shall not exceed the cost incurred in processing payments.

19) What type of payments are accepted by an electronic filing service provider (EFSP)?

Each EFSP is different. Please check with the EFSP of your choice.

20) Will my filing fees be automatically assessed?

Some filing fees are added at the time you select the document type. This only happens if the filing fee always applies. The system will not automatically assess a fee that does not always apply for the document type selected.

21) What are the filing hours for e-filing?

Documents can be e-filed 24 hours a day. Any e-filing received by the Court before midnight will be deemed received or filed on the same business day if accepted. Any electronic filing submitted after midnight will be deemed received or filed as of the next business day if accepted. Any document received electronically on a non-court day, is deemed to have been effectively filed on the next court day if accepted. (California Rules of Court, rule 2.253(b)(6); Code Civ. Proc. § 1010.6(b)(3)). See Local Rule 3.27.

22) What are the requirements for e-filing?

The requirements for e-filing are described in the [e-filing Technical Requirements](#) on the court's civil, family, probate, mental health and adoptions e-filing webpages.

23) What if I use Word, Word Perfect or other software that is not a PDF?

Please refer to the Court's [e-filing Technical Requirements](#). A PDF is mandatory for e-filing. The EFSP may be able to assist you in converting a non-PDF file into the proper format to be accepted for e-filing.

24) Are there file size limitations for e-filing?

Yes. As a general rule of thumb, 25 megabytes per document and 60 megabytes per e-filing transaction is a good guideline.

25) What is an "electronic envelope"?

An electronic envelope is a transaction containing one or more PDF documents on the same case number submitted through the electronic filing service provider (EFSP). For example, if you wanted to file two separate documents at the same time, you would file them as separate PDF documents in the same electronic envelope.

26) What is a filing document name?

A filing document name is the type of filing you are submitting such as a petition, response, motion, request for order, etc. It's used by the EFSP to properly designate the document for submission. Ensuring you label your document name correctly is critical. The name of the document determines the appropriate fee and court workflow. A list of document names can be found in the [e-filing Document Finder](#) on the court's website.

27) What if I cannot find the document name for my e-filing?

If the document you are e-filing is not specified in the list of documents on our website, use a name of a document that most closely describes your filing. You may also use a generic document name with name extension and fill in the name extension field in the comment section. ***Please note: Using an incorrect document name or name extension will result in either a rejected filing or the incorrect routing of your document.***

28) What is a lead document?

A lead document can be a case initiating document (e.g. complaint or petition), a moving document (e.g. motion), a responsive document (e.g. answer or response) or an ex parte document (e.g. ex parte application or stipulation and order). You may only file *one* lead document per e-filing transaction. Check out the [e-filing Document Finder](#) for assistance determining which documents are considered "lead" documents.

29) Once a document is e-filed, what is the processing time?

Processing time will depend on the type of document filed. Processing office hours are 8:30-4:00pm Monday-Friday excluding holidays. The court strives to review and process all documents submitted via e-filing within three business days.

30) What if my document is rejected?

Any document rejected will include the reason for the rejection of the document. If your document is rejected, you must correct and resubmit the document.

Typical reasons for rejection include:

- Multiple filing documents submitted as a single filing code. Each document should be filed as a separate pdf file.
- Incorrect filing code (document type) selected.
- Incorrect case type selected. (Doesn't match document)
- Incorrect payment option selected.
- Party's name submitted to EFSP does not match the party's name listed on initial document.
- Party's address submitted to EFSP does not match the party's address on the initial document.
- Missing required documents.

31) How do I correct an error in a filing that has been accepted by the Court?

Depending on the type of filing, you may file an amended pleading, or apply to the court for relief or other corrective order.

32) Can I cancel an e-filing transaction after it's been submitted?

No. Once submitted, the transaction is final.

33) Are documents available to the public once they are e-filed?

Filing parties may view submitted documents immediately through their electronic filing service provider's (EFSP) portal. All other parties will be able to view documents through the court's [eCourt Public Portal](#) once the document is accepted by the Court.

34) Can I e-file a confidential document?

Documents submitted as confidential will only be deemed confidential pursuant to legal authority or if that determination is made by the Court. For example, just marking a document as confidential will not make it so. See [e-filing Technical Requirements](#) for information on e-filing sealed or redacted documents.

35) Do I need to submit a printed courtesy copy?

Yes, in certain instances and pursuant to Alameda County Superior Court Local Rule 3.30(c). During trial, motions, memoranda, and matters presented to the Court in writing for decision may be served in open court in hard copy form after having been e-filed. See [e-filing Technical Requirements](#) for information on courtesy copies.

36) Have I consented to electronic service?

Yes, parties required to file documents electronically have agreed to accept electronic service at the electronic service address provided. (California Rules of Court, rule 2.251(C)(3))

Self-represented litigants and parties exempt from e-filing must affirmatively consent to acceptance of electronic service. (California Rules of Court, rule 2.251(b)(1) (B))

37) Will the Court electronically serve other parties for me?

No. The Court will not electronically service other parties.

38) Can I use an electronic filing service provider (EFSP) to electronically serve other parties?

Yes. EFSPs offer this service for a fee. Refer to the specific EFSP's website to determine which service best fits your business needs.

39) What are the rules/guidelines for electronic service?

Please refer to California Rules of Court, rule 2.251 and Code of Civil Procedure Section 1010.6.

40) Do I have to file a proof of service if I electronically serve?

Yes. A proof of service is required to be e-filed pursuant to California Rules of the Court 2.251(J)(1)-(3).

41) How are motions scheduled in e-filing?

Motions must first be scheduled using Court Reservation System (CRS) in the Court's eCourt Public Portal. Upon obtaining the reservation the motion can be e-filed. The CRS reservation receipt must be included when e-filing a motion. If submitted without a reservation receipt, the e-filing will be rejected.

42) How should motions and supporting documents be submitted?

Motions with supporting documents can be submitted in the same transaction. However, all documents, including any proposed order, must be submitted as separate PDF documents. In addition, when submitting files, make sure the first document filed is a lead document. For a list of documents, and to see which qualify as lead documents, please visit our e-filing document finder page [here](#).

43) Where do I find my transaction number?

Transaction numbers are provided by your EFSP and noted on your confirmation of filing.

44) How can I become an electronic filing service provider for the Superior Court of Alameda County?

Potential EFSPs can reach out to Journal Technologies at efilingsupport@journaltech.com for more information.

45) How do I e-file into a Judicial Council Coordination Proceeding (JCCP) case?

To e-file into a JCCP case, you must have a Superior Court of Alameda County issued case number for your coordinated case. Please input the Superior Court of Alameda County case number when e-filing. The Superior Court of Alameda County case number and the JCCP case number must be on all submitted documents.

46) What if I do not have a Superior Court Alameda County case number?

To obtain an Alameda County case number you must open a new case via e-filing. If an add-on petition was not previously filed and granted your lead document must be the add on petition.

47) What if I already filed an add-on petition but cannot locate my Superior Court of Alameda County case number?

You may complete a Name Search using the court's [eCourt Public Portal](#).

48) What if my JCCP case was part of the initial coordination order but I do not have a Superior Court of Alameda County coordinated case number?

To obtain an Superior Court of Alameda County case number you must open a new case via e-filing. The Order for Coordination should be entered as the lead document.

49) What if I was not ordered to file an add-on petition but I need to obtain a Superior Court of Alameda County coordinated case number? What document do I file and how do I file it?

If you were not ordered to file an add-on petition your case must be part of the original coordination order. Please conduct a Name Search in the Court's [eCourt Public Portal](#).