

Superior Court of California County of Los Angeles

Civil efilng Frequently Asked Questions

1. IS THERE A GENERAL ORDER THAT GOVERNS EFILING FOR CIVIL?

Yes. The General Order Re Mandatory Electronic Filing for Civil is posted on the Court's website at www.lacourt.org. The Court suggests that litigants read the Order before reviewing these FAQs.

2. HOW DOES EFILING WORK?

Electronic filing of court documents occurs through an electronic filing service provider (EFSP). The user creates an account and the efilng system manages the flow of the documents and fees to and from the Court. The filer will submit the documents to the EFSP for submission to the Court. The Court will accept or reject the documents and the documents are returned to the EFSP for return to the filer through the EFSP's electronic filing portal.

3. I AM A SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANT. DO I HAVE TO EFILE?

Self-represented litigants are not mandated to electronically file documents; however, they may choose to do so if desired.

4. WHEN CAN I BEGIN TO EFILE?

In Limited Civil (excluding Small Claims) cases, you may voluntarily electronically file effective November 13, 2018. In non-Complex Unlimited Civil cases, you may voluntarily electronically file effective December 3, 2018.

5. WHEN AM I REQUIRED TO EFILE?

In Limited Civil cases, litigants represented by attorneys must efile beginning December 3, 2018. In Unlimited non-Complex Civil cases, litigants represented by attorneys must efile beginning January 2, 2019.

6. ARE ANY DOCUMENTS EXEMPT FROM EFILING?

Yes, the following documents are excluded from efiling:

- *Peremptory challenges or challenges for cause of a judicial officer*
- *Bonds/undertaking documents*
- *Trial and hearing exhibits*
- *Lodged documents*

7. HOW DO I SUBMIT DOCUMENTS EXEMPT FROM EFILING?

Documents that are exempt from efiling can be submitted for filing in the Clerk's Office of the Civil Division between the office hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. or by mail (visit www.lacourt.org for courthouse addresses).

8. HOW DO I GET STARTED?

The Court's website, http://www.lacourt.org/division/efiling/Civil_Providers.aspx, offers additional information, including more frequently asked questions and a complete list of electronic filing service providers (EFSPs), to help you get started.

9. IS EFILING THE SAME AS FAX FILING?

No. Efilng is not the same as fax filing. For efiling, the filing party must use an electronic filing service provider (EFSP) and will submit documents for filing over the internet. The Court will no longer accept fax filing for civil documents.

10. WILL FAX FILING STILL BE AVAILABLE AFTER EFILING IS IMPLEMENTED?

No. Fax filing will not be available for civil documents after voluntary efiling is implemented for each civil case type. (Refer to #5 for implementation dates.)

11. IS EDELIVERY THE SAME AS EFILING?

No. EDelivery is not the same as efiling. For efiling, the filing party must select from a variety electronic filing service providers (EFSPs) and will submit documents for filing over the internet. The Court will retire eDelivery upon the implementation of efiling for civil documents.

12. CAN I USE MY PERSONAL COMPUTER TO EFILE?

Yes, you can use your personal computer to submit filings through an electronic filing service provider (EFSP). You will use the internet to select the EFSP and submit your documents for filing. You will upload the document as an attachment. For instructions, refer to your EFSP's website.

13. WHAT ELECTRONIC FILING SERVICE PROVIDER (EFSP) CAN I USE?

You may use any electronic filing service provider (EFSP) that is listed on the Court's website, http://www.lacourt.org/division/efiling/Civil_Providers.aspx.

14. WHY DO I HAVE TO REGISTER AS AN ELECTRONIC FILER (EFILER)?

Registration as an electronic filer is required to establish an account for your electronically filed documents. Your account will allow you to check the status of your electronically filed documents and will provide a path for the Court to return your documents to you.

15. CAN I CHANGE MY ELECTRONIC SERVICE PROVIDER (EFSP) AFTER I HAVE CHOSEN AND REGISTERED WITH ONE?

Yes, you may choose any electronic filing service provider (EFSP). You may change to a different service provider at any time. Selecting and using an EFSP is similar to using an "attorney service" for your filings, except the types of filings processed are electronic.

16. DO I HAVE TO USE AN ELECTRONIC FILING SERVICE PROVIDER (EFSP)?

Yes, the Court does not accept electronic filings directly. An electronic filing service provider (EFSP) must be used. You can find a list of approved service providers on the Court's public website at www.lacourt.org and select the "efiling" tab on the home page.

17. IS THERE A COST TO EFILE?

Yes, there is a cost to efile. The Court charges \$2.25 per transaction. The EFSP fee for efiling and the payment service fee are not costs charged by the Court. These fees are collected by the electronic filing service provider (EFSP).

18. ARE EFILING CONVENIENCE FEES RECOVERABLE?

Yes, efiling fees are recoverable pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure section 1033.5.

19. WHAT TYPE OF PAYMENTS DO YOU ACCEPT?

Please check with the electronic filing service provider (EFSP) of your choosing for specific information regarding payment types. Credit cards and electronic checks are accepted..

20. DO COURT-APPOINTED ATTORNEYS HAVE TO EFILE AND PAY THE CONVENIENCE FEE FOR EFILING?

Yes. Absent a fee waiver, fees are applicable for all filings, including filings from court-appointed attorneys

21. ONCE I EFILE A DOCUMENT, WHAT IS THE TYPICAL TURNAROUND TIME FOR PROCESSING?

Turnaround time will depend on the type of document filed. Typically, an electronically filed document will be processed by the Court within 24 hours. Proposed orders, writs, abstracts, and other documents requiring further action by the Court may take longer than 24 hours to process.

22. ARE MY EFILED DOCUMENTS PRINTED FOR THE COURT FILE?

No, documents that are electronically filed and accepted by the Court are automatically uploaded to the Court's case management system. This allows the court staff and judicial officers to electronically view the case documents without printing the document or maintaining a physical court file. The electronic record is the official court record pursuant to Government Code section 68150(a).

23. WHAT ARE THE FILING HOURS FOR EFILING?

You may submit your filings electronically 24 hours a day. Any efilings received up to 11:59 p.m. will be deemed received or filed on the same business day if accepted for filing. Any efilings submitted after midnight will be deemed received or filed the next business day if accepted for filing.

24. ARE DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC UPON SUBMISSION OR UPON PROCESSING?

Filing parties may view documents submitted immediately through their electronic filing service provider's (EFSP's) portal. All other parties will be able to view a document upon acceptance by the Court from the internet or on public terminals located at any Los Angeles County courthouse. A document is not considered filed until it is accepted by the Court. However, unlimited civil complaints will be available to the media upon submission while being reviewed for acceptance by the Court.

25. WHAT DATE WILL MY DOCUMENT BE FILED STAMPED IF I EFILE AFTER 5:00 P.M.?

The Court will honor the filing date through 11:59 p.m. the day a document is electronically submitted, except if a document is rejected.

26. DOES THE COURT HAVE A POLICY REGARDING DOCUMENTS EFILED ON THE LAST DAY?

No. Statutory requirements apply for preservation of any statute of limitation on filings, including those submitted electronically. The Court does not have a policy on the last day to file a document. Efilng does not change "last day to file" requirements, other than to extend filing hours to 11:59 p.m.

27. WHAT IS A “TRANSACTION”?

A transaction is the filing of a document, or group of documents, in one single submission through the electronic filing system.

28. WHAT IS A “FILING DOCUMENT NAME”?

A Filing Document Name refers to the type of filing (e.g. answer, demurrer, motion, etc.) and is used by the electronic filing service provider (EFSP) to properly designate the document(s) upon submission. Using the correct Filing Document Name is extremely important as it determines the appropriate fee and court workflow. A list of the Court’s Filing Document Names is available on the Court’s website on the Civil Webpage at www.LACourt.org.

29. WHAT IS AN “ENVELOPE”?

An envelope contains a document or group of documents for a single Filing Document Name for a single case number, or a group of documents for multiple Filing Document Names that will be processed in one transaction for one single case number.

30. WHAT IS “BOOKMARKING” OF EXHIBITS AND/OR ATTACHMENTS TO DOCUMENTS?

Bookmarking of exhibits and/or attachments to documents indicates the process in which the navigational tool in a PDF document tags a designated point of interest within the document, allowing the reader to easily locate and navigate to that specific point of interest.

31. WHAT IS “HYPERLINKING”?

Hyperlinking is the process in which a section of words (called anchor text) is connected or linked to a different section of text in the same document (including attachments or exhibits to that document).

32. WHERE IS THE “FILED” STAMP NOW?

The Court is utilizing a filing stamp “ribbon” which will appear on the top of the first page of the document returned to the efilier through the electronic filing service provider (EFSP).

33. HOW WILL I KNOW TO WHICH JUDICIAL OFFICER MY CASE IS ASSIGNED?

A new filing receives the assigned case number and judicial officer assignment upon acceptance of the filing. This information will appear on the top of the first page of the document. For Unlimited Civil documents, in addition to the imprinted information, a Notice of Case Assignment will be returned electronically by the electronic filing service provider (EFSP).

34. WHAT HAPPENS IF I SELECT THE WRONG COURT LOCATION?

Your electronically filed document will be rejected and electronically returned to you through the electronic filing service provider (EFSP) for correction and resubmission with the proper filing location indicated.

35. WHAT ARE TYPICAL RETURN REASONS?

In addition to failing to follow California Rules of Court, rules 2.100 et seq., some typical reasons a filing may be rejected by the Court include, but are not limited to:

- *Multiple filing documents are submitted as a single Filing Document Name (i.e., the cover sheet should be a separate PDF)*
- *Incorrect Filing Document Name is selected*
- *Incorrect court location is selected*
- *Incorrect case type is selected*
- *Incorrect payment account option is selected (e.g., fee waiver)*
- *Party's name does not match the party's name listed on the document for initial documents*
- *Party's address does not match the party's address listed on the document for initial documents*
- *Missing required documents*
- *Missing required information*

36. ARE MOTIONS AUTOMATICALLY SCHEDULED BY THE EFILING SYSTEM?

No. Motions must be scheduled for non-Complex Unlimited Civil, Limited Civil Collections and non-Collections cases using the Court Reservation System (CRS). CRS is not currently available via efiling but may be accessed at www.lacourt.org under "Online Services".

37. CAN I EFILE 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 envelope.

38. WILL A NOTICE OF CASE ASSIGNMENT BE GENERATED WHEN I EFILE A NEW COMPLAINT OR PETITION?

Yes, for Unlimited Civil cases. On all initial filings, the case number and judicial officer assignment information will be provided on the face page.

39. CAN I ASK TO SEND A CONFIRMATION EMAIL TO ANOTHER PARTY / PERSON?

The electronic service provider (EFSP) may allow the option to send a confirmation email to another email address other than what is indicated in your registered account. The confirmation email is not considered electronic service of the document.

40. DO I NEED TO SUBMIT A PRINTED COURTESY COPY?

In certain instances, and pursuant to the General Order Re Mandatory Electronic Filing for Civil, printed courtesy copies must be submitted to the Court.

Proof of electronic submission must be submitted with all courtesy copies.

Regardless of the time of electronic filing, a printed courtesy copy (along with proof of electronic submission) is required for the following documents:

- Any printed document required pursuant to a Standing or General Order
- Pleadings and motions (including attachments such as declarations and exhibits) of 26 pages or more
- Pleadings and motions that include points and authorities
- Demurrers
- Anti-SLAPP filings, pursuant to Code Civ. Proc., § 425.16
- Motions for Summary Judgment/Adjudication
- Motions to Compel Further Discovery

Nothing in the General Order precludes a judicial officer from requesting a courtesy copy of additional documents. Courtroom specific courtesy copy guidelines can be found at www.lacourt.org on the Civil webpage under "Courtroom Information".

41. WHAT IS THE TIMELINESS REQUIREMENT FOR DELIVERING COURTESY COPIES?

Courtesy copies for filings with a hearing date of two days or less shall be delivered to the courtroom by 4:30 p.m. the same business day if the electronic filing is submitted with the court prior to that time. If submitted after 4:30 p.m., the courtesy copy shall be delivered to the courtroom by 10 a.m. the next business day.

For ex parte courtesy copies, please see FAQ #52.

42. HOW WILL I RECEIVE A COPY OF MY PROPOSED ORDER?

The proposed order will be electronically transmitted back to the submitting party by the electronic filing service provider (EFSP).

43. IN WHAT FORMAT SHOULD I EFILE MY PROPOSED ORDER?

Submit your proposed order in PDF. If submitted with motions, applications or other documents, proposed orders must be submitted as separate documents. These documents may be submitted in a single envelope.

44. HOW WILL I BE NOTIFIED WHEN MY PROPOSED ORDER IS SIGNED?

Once a proposed order is reviewed and signed by a judicial officer, the filed order will be transmitted back to the filer by the electronic filing service provider (EFSP). All efiled orders will be returned electronically by the EFSP.

45. CAN I SCAN DOCUMENTS THAT ACCOMPANY A PROPOSED ORDER?

Yes, attachments to a proposed order may be scanned for concurrent review with a proposed order. Each document to be "Filed" as part of the court record shall be efiled as a separate document.

46. WHEN SHOULD PROPOSED ORDERS BE EFILED SEPARATELY?

The motion, request or application (including ex parte application) should have the proposed order included in the same envelope. The proposed order should be a separate document.

47. WILL THE COURT ELECTRONICALLY SERVE (ESERVE) OTHER PARTIES FOR ME?

No. The Court will not electronically serve other parties on behalf of another party. Contact your electronic service provider (EFSP) for options.

48. CAN I USE AN ELECTRONIC FILING SERVICE PROVIDER TO ELECTRONICALLY SERVE OTHER PARTIES?

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

49. CAN I USE EMAIL TO ELECTRONICALLY SERVE (ESERVE) OTHER PARTIES?

Code of Civil Procedure section 1010.6 states in pertinent part:

(a) A document may be served electronically in an action filed with the court as provided in this section, in accordance with rules adopted pursuant to subdivision (e).

50. WHAT ARE THE RULES OR GUIDELINES FOR ELECTRONIC SERVICE?

Refer to California Rules of Court rule 2.251 and Code of Civil Procedure section 1010.6.

California Rules of Court, rule 2.251 states in pertinent part:

(c) Electronic service required by local rule or court order

(3) *Except when personal service is otherwise required by statute or rule, a party or other person that is required to file documents electronically in an action must also serve documents and accept service of documents electronically from all other parties or persons, unless:*

(A) *The court orders otherwise, or*

(B) *The action includes parties or persons that are not required to file or serve documents electronically, including self-represented parties or other self-represented persons; those parties or other persons are to be served by non-electronic methods unless they affirmatively consent to electronic service.*

Code of Civil Procedure section 1010.6 states in pertinent part:

(a) *A document may be served electronically in an action filed with the court as provided in this section, in accordance with rules adopted pursuant to subdivision (e).*

(2) (A) (i) *For cases filed on or before December 31, 2018, if a document may be served by mail, express mail, overnight delivery, or facsimile transmission, electronic service of the document is not authorized unless a party or other person has agreed to accept electronic service in that specific action or the court has ordered electronic service on a represented party or other represented person under subdivision (c) or (d).*

(ii) *For cases filed on or after January 1, 2019, if a document may be served by mail, express mail, overnight delivery, or facsimile transmission, electronic service of the document is not authorized unless a party or other person has expressly consented to receive electronic service in that specific action or the court has ordered electronic service on a represented party or other represented person under subdivision (c) or (d). Express consent to electronic service may be accomplished either by (I) serving a notice on all the parties and filing the notice with the court, or (II) manifesting affirmative consent through electronic means with the court or the court's electronic filing service provider, and concurrently providing the party's electronic address with that consent for the purpose of receiving electronic service. The act of electronic filing shall not be construed as express consent.*

51. IF I FILE ELECTRONICALLY, HAVE I CONSENTED TO ELECTRONIC SERVICE ON THIS CASE?

Yes, refer to California Rules of Court, rule 2.251(b)(1)(B). By efilng the document, you agree to accept electronic service at the electronic service address you provided. Self-represented parties must affirmatively consent to acceptance of electronic service.

52. MUST I FILE A PROOF OF SERVICE IF I ELECTRONICALLY SERVE (ESERVE)?

Yes, a Proof of Service must be efiled pursuant to California Rules of Court, rule 2.251(j)(1) - (3) which states in pertinent part:

(1) *Proof of electronic service shall be made as provided in Code of Civil Procedure section 1013b.*

(2) *Under California Rules of Court, rule 3.1300(c), proof of electronic service of the moving papers must be filed at least five court days before the hearing.*

(3) *If a person signs a printed form of a proof of electronic service, the party or other person filing the proof of electronic service must comply with the provisions of California Rules of Court, rule 2.257(a).*

53. WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SERVICES OFFERED BY THE EFSP?

Information about services offered by individual electronic service providers (EFSPs) can be found on their direct websites. A list of EFSPs can be found on the Court's website http://www.lacourt.org/division/efiling/Civil_Providers.aspx.

54. HOW CAN I DESIGNATE MY DOCUMENT AS AN EX PARTE FILING?

The efilier must select "ex parte" as the document type during the efiling process. All ex parte filings will be expedited.

55. WHAT IS THE CUT-OFF TIME FOR EFILING MY EX PARTE DOCUMENTS?

Ex parte applications must be efiled no later than 10:00 a.m. the day before the ex parte hearing. Any written opposition to an ex parte application must be efiled by 8:30 a.m. the day of the ex parte hearing.

- *Opposition to an ex parte application that is efiled by 4:00 p.m. on the same day the ex parte is filed does not require a courtesy copy.*
- *Opposition to an ex parte application that is efiled after 4:00 p.m. requires that a courtesy copy be brought to court the day of the ex parte hearing.*
- *The proposed order shall be included as a separate document in the same envelope as the ex parte application and brought to court the morning of the ex parte hearing.*

56. IF I EFILE MY EX PARTE APPLICATION, DO I HAVE TO APPEAR?

An applicant for ex parte order must appear, pursuant to California Rules of Court, rule 3.1207.

57. DOES IT MATTER WHAT DPI (DOTS PER INCH) IS USED WHEN SCANNING A DOCUMENT?

Yes, the Trial Court Records Manual recommends 300 DPI resolution. DPI refers to the output resolution of the scanner when a document is scanned. The DPI only factors in if you are scanning and attaching a document. If you start your document in a word processing application and convert it to PDF, text searchable format will be preserved.

58. DO I NEED TO SCAN A DOCUMENT THAT INCLUDES AN ORIGINAL SIGNATURE?

Retention of original signed documents shall be pursuant to California Rules of Court, rule 2.257 and Code of Civil Procedure section 1010.6. For documents efiled with the Court, the filing party may use /s/ followed by the name of the individual on the signature line of a document.

59. SHOULD A DOCUMENT BE PASSWORD PROCTECTED?

No, documents should not be password protected and will be rejected if the content cannot be viewed.

60. CAN JUDICIAL COUNCIL FORMS BE EFILED?

Yes, Judicial Council forms are fillable and can be uploaded for efiling.

61. WILL THE COURT ACCEPT A SCANNED PDF WHEN THIRD PARTY LEGAL SOFTWARE IS USED TO COMPLETE FORMS?

Yes, forms completed using third party software can be efiled as an uploaded PDF. Documents submitted via efiling must be text searchable.

62. CAN I EFILE A CONFIDENTIAL DOCUMENT?

The filer may not establish a document's security level. In other words, a document submitted as "confidential" by the filer will only become confidential pursuant to legal authority or if that determination is made by the Court.

For example, a limited civil Unlawful Detainer Complaint would automatically be filed as a confidential document pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure section 1161.2.

63. CAN I EFILE A DOCUMENT UNDER SEAL?

The filer may submit a document "conditionally under seal" by selecting that Filing Document Name pending a ruling by the Court pursuant to California Rules of Court rules 2.550-2.551. The document will be sealed pending a ruling by the Court.

64. HOW DO I OBTAIN A CERTIFIED COPY?

Certified copies may be requested from the Court's records unit by mail or in person. If submitted by mail, include a pre-paid method of return, such as a self-addressed stamped envelope. In the future, the Court will be certifying documents electronically. The Government Code allows all the institutions, including banks, to accept electronically certified documents from the Court.

65. CAN I PAY JURY FEES VIA EFILING?

Yes, the initial fee for the jury demand can be paid via efiling by selecting the "Notice of Deposit for Jury Fees" document type during the efiling process. Daily jury fees must be paid in the Clerk's Office after the judicial assistant/courtroom clerk assesses the fees and creates an invoice.

66. WHAT ARE THE FILE SIZE LIMITATIONS FOR EFILING?

The Court's Electronic File Manager (EFM) does not have a file size limitation, however, file size limitations vary among EFSPs.

67. WHAT IS THE PROCESS WHEN AN EFILED DOCUMENT EXCEEDS THE FILE SIZE LIMIT?

If restricted, the document will be sent back to the filer with the error message, "File size too large – please reduce and resubmit."

COMPLEX/JUDICIAL COUNCIL COORDINATED PROCEEDINGS (JCCP) ONLY:

68. IS THERE A GENERAL ORDER THAT SPECIFICALLY GOVERNS COMPLEX LITIGATION, INCLUDING JCCP ACTIONS?

Yes. The General Order Re Mandatory Electronic Filing for Complex Civil is posted on the Court's website at www.lacourt.org. The Court suggests that litigants read the Order before reviewing the following FAQs.

69. HOW ARE FEES COLLECTED FOR COMPLEX FILINGS?

All fees are due upon the filing of a complex document will be assessed and collected at the time of the electronic filing, including, but not limited to first paper, motion, complex and pro hac vice fees.

70. HOW WILL FEES FOR MOTIONS THAT RELATE TO MULTIPLE CASES IN A JCCP ACTION BE HANDLED?

For any motion electronically filed on one case and applied to multiple cases, a single motion fee will be assessed. The filer must submit a list of cases to which the motion will apply with the motion.

71. HOW WILL FEES BE ASSESSED FOR MULTIPLE MOTIONS THAT RELATE TO MULTIPLE CASES IN A JCCP ACTION?

A fee for each separate motion will be collected at the time of electronic filing for multiple motions that relate to multiple cases.

72. SHOULD THE JCCP NUMBER BE INCLUDED ON ELECTRONICALLY FILED DOCUMENTS?

Yes. For all JCCP cases, all electronically filed documents must reflect the JCCP action number and at least one underlying case number.

73. CAN I ELECTRONICALLY FILE AN ADD-ON PETITION?

Yes. A petition to add cases to a JCCP action must be electronically filed.

74. IS THERE A FEE TO ELECTRONICALLY FILE AN ADD-ON PETITION ?

There is no filing fee assessed at the time of electronically filing of an add-on petition. However, fees associated with electronically filing this document will be collected by the EFSP and the court.

75. WILL ' BULLETIN BOARDS' CONTINUE TO BE USED IN JCCP ACTIONS?

Yes. The court has approved two 'bulletin board' providers, which can be found on the court's website at www.lacourt.org/division/efiling/efiling2.aspx#civil. Efilers must agree on a single provider for use in each JCCP action.