



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Do I have to e-file?** E-filing is mandated for almost all documents filed by **ATTORNEYS**. Exceptions can be found in the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure. Self-represented litigants may e-file, but it is not mandatory.

**Do I have to use an Electronic Filing Service Provider (EFSP)?** Yes, and you may also file directly through E-Filing Portal. There are other EFSP vendor options, and one of the others may offer additional services which might be of interest to you. Please visit <http://www.EFileTexas.gov> for more information.

**What format does my document have to be in?** Documents must conform to the JCIT Technology Standards. There are a few case management requirements. These can be found under the e-filing section of our website.

**When filing a case with an Affidavit of Indigence/Pauper's Oath or where an attorney has been court appointed to represent a litigant, how are the fees handled?** You will have a "waiver" option for those instances where you are not required to make a payment. Check with your ESFP to verify they provide the "waiver" option. Affidavits of Indigence will continue to follow current screening processes.

You should not use the waiver option without including one of the following with your filing:

- Affidavit of Inability to Pay – Affidavits will be screened for eligibility.
- IOLTA Certificate
- Copy or Order of Appointment (copies of appointment orders should be an attachment to your lead document)

**May I include more than one document for filing per submission?** Yes. The E-Filing Portal will allow multiple documents (within the same cause number) for file-marking per submission. Each document must be a lead document.

**My document has two cause numbers listed. Do I need to submit the document twice?** Yes. Once for each cause number listed on the document.

**How do I submit proposed orders/ notices of hearing?** Use the filing code PROPOSED ORDER for all unsigned orders. The proposed order will be a lead document. For Notices of Hearing, use a non-fee filing code. The notice of hearing will also be a lead document.

**What if I am not sure if my document requires a filing fee?** Please check the filing fees for updated fee information prior to submission.

**When filing an original answer with more than one defendant how will this be handled?** When filing an original answer for more than one defendant, you may submit one answer. The clerk will make certain to tag each of the defendants in the answer on the case management system after the filing is accepted.

**How do I create a searchable PDF?** The JCIT Technology Standards require all e-filed documents to be in a text-searchable PDF. Documents in Word or WordPerfect can be saved as text searchable PDF's. Simply click "Save As" and a new window will pop up. Under the text field for the file name is a drop down menu. Click the drop down menu and select "PDF." Once you have clicked "Save", you will have a PDF document that is text searchable. That document will have a ".pdf" extension in the file name. If you do not have the Adobe software, are not using Word or have other documents to attach to your Word document prior to submission, we highly recommend that you "google" how to make a document text searchable.

**Can we continue to use our current E-Filing Service Provider (EFSP)** Yes, if your current EFSP also provides e-Filing support for the E-Filing Portal system you may continue to use that EFSP.

**Will I need to pay for service copies of pleadings when I file a document that requests service?** Yes, copy fees are listed as an optional service and you will also need to indicate in the comments whether the issuance will be picked up by the attorney's office, a private process server or will need to be mailed back by the clerk's office. If the item is to be mailed to the attorney, you will now have the option to pay for postage fees via the e-filing portal. If an instrument is to be returned to the

attorney for private process, the attorney/filer may request that the instrument be returned via e-service.

**Can E-File be used to initiate cases or to file into existing cases?** Yes, the E-Filing Portal can be used to initiate cases, e-file into existing cases, or serve documents. Both attorneys and support staff can use the system under their own user names.

**Will I have access to prior e-filed documents?** A link to the filed document will be available in E-Filing Portal for 30 days. After that, documents will be available for viewing via public access if applicable.

**What is e-service?** E-service is a feature provided by the E-Filing Portal where documents are electronically served to other parties in a case. Using this option, you can track when each party received and opened the filing. You can find more info at [www.EFileTexas.gov](http://www.EFileTexas.gov). The Clerk's Office is also using this service to return process instruments to the attorney in lieu of sending a runner or picking up the documents from the Clerk's Office.

**Is there a list of events available?** Yes. The Judicial Committee on Information Technology has released statewide standard case types and filing codes. These are available on the e-filing section of our website.

**Is "s/" acceptable for electronic filings?** Yes. Please list the names of all signatories. For Example: "s/" John Smith. Additional alternatives are listed in the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure.

**How will I know where in the process is my filing?** You will be receiving an e-mail notification directly from the e-filing portal and/or EFSP. You may also contact the court directly. Court clerk contact information is available at: [www.dallascounty.org/departments/districtclerk/civil-courtclerkcontact.html](http://www.dallascounty.org/departments/districtclerk/civil-courtclerkcontact.html).

**I want to E-File but I am NOT an attorney, what do I do?** Anyone can file electronically through a certified EFSP or directly through the e-Filing portal. Pro-Se litigants are able to file electronically. Please visit [www.EFileTexas.gov](http://www.EFileTexas.gov) for more information.

**I already use an EFSP, do I need to switch?** No, as long as your current EFSP has been certified to submit filings to E-Filing Portal, there is no need to switch providers. Please visit the E-Filing Portal website at [www.EFileTexas.gov](http://www.EFileTexas.gov) to confirm your EFSP has been certified.

**I made a mistake on a filing but submitted it anyway, such as filing in the**

**wrong case. What should I do?** If your document is not under review, you can cancel the submission.

**What will the process be for filing TROs and Ex Parte Order?** Our processes have not changed. The only difference will be the manner in which you submit your filing. Your original pleadings and associated documents will be e-filed. After that, you may contact the court and walk your cases through as usual. You are encouraged to contact our office immediately after submitting your filings in order to fast track your submission. You are encouraged to bring in courtesy copies of your file marked documents for conforming and issuance.

**I'm trying to get service issued, but I do not see the optional service I need in the drop down box. What should I do?** Use the filing code REQUEST with a cover letter or associated Request for Service form. The cover letter or form will serve as your lead document. The Request for Service filing code contains every possible optional service within our case management system. When filing your pleading, choose the applicable optional service from the drop down box. You will be able to pay for service instruments, service fees, copy fees and postage fees under optional services at the same time that you file. The District Clerk's office has the following forms available online when requesting service:

Post-Judgment Request



Request for Citation by Posting or Publishing



Request for Issuance of Employers Order for Withhold



Request for Subpoena



**Will we be able to e-file documents at the courthouse?** The District Clerk's is in the process of receiving equipment for kiosks/public access stations. Until then, filers are encouraged to find an alternative method to e-filing (Wi-Fi and laptops, pads, smart phones, etc.) with the likelihood that documents may need to be e-filed at their respective offices.

**I just e-filed a sensitive document and it is available on public access. Who should I contact?** Contact one of the supervisors and the lead clerk of the court in which your case is assigned. Contact information can be found on our website at: [http://www.dallascounty.org/department/districtclerk/districtclerk\\_index.html](http://www.dallascounty.org/department/districtclerk/districtclerk_index.html)

**I filed an affidavit and it was returned for correction. What did I do wrong?** There are two common formats for affidavits. An affidavit containing a case number,

style and caption on a case should be filed as a lead document. When an affidavit does not have a caption, case number or style, is it considered a part of your lead document.

**In regard to sensitive data under TRCP 21c (a), is the rule referring to any date of birth, and address and names of minors?** The Texas Supreme Court has received many inquiries about this rule. According to information provided by the Texas Supreme Court, this rule applies to the birth date, home address, and name of a minor when the suit was filed. It does not apply to the birthdate or home address of an adult.