

Steps for E-Filing—Civil and Probate

E-filing is the process for submitting documents to the court electronically. When you can e-file, you avoid the need to go to court to submit the paperwork. In Los Angeles Superior Court civil and probate e-filing is available to self-represented litigants but is not required. All documents filed by attorneys in non-complex civil matters MUST be filed electronically unless the court rules otherwise. If you are representing yourself and would prefer not to e-file, you can use the drop boxes outside courthouses or USPS to mail your court documents. For more information about alternatives to e-filing for filing court documents, click here. [Options for Filing Court Documents](#).

Step 1: Official Procedures: LA Superior Court's website provides instructions on e-filing procedures: <http://www.lacourt.org/division/efiling/efiling2.aspx>.

Step 2: Type of Case: While the process and providers for e-filing civil cases or probate cases is similar, the court lists the providers and procedures separately. On the court's website, for Civil cases, click on **Civil e-filing**; for Probate cases, click on **Probate e-filing**. Please note: documents in civil cases designated as complex cannot be e-filed at this time.

Step 3: Reviewing Providers: Click on the **View Electronic Filing Service Providers** button; you will see a page listing all Court-approved **Electronic Filing Service Providers (EFSP)**. You must choose a vendor from that list in order to e-file civil or probate case documents with LA Superior Court. Review the features of the various providers by clicking on the blue hyperlink beneath each vendor's logo. Choose the provider that best fits your needs.

Step 4: Registration: Register with the EFSP of your choice. If you have never registered as an electronic filer, you will have to create an account that will allow you to file documents with LA Superior Court electronically.

Step 5: Electronic payment information: There is a separate e-filing service provider fee in addition to any regular court filing fees. (To see regular court filing fees, see the statewide fee schedules found at http://www.lacourt.org/forms/pdf/fees/fee-schedule-2020_rev1.pdf) In general, most vendors accept credit cards and/or electronic checks, but make sure to confirm permissible payment methods with the EFSP you have selected. Costs vary depending on the vendor as well as the documents you want to file, as well as whether: 1) you e-file them yourself using the EFSP or 2) you submit them directly to the EFSP who then handles the formatting and naming of documents and submits them on your behalf (referred to as a "concierge service" or "e-file for me" by many vendors). While self-service e-filing ranges from \$1.95 to \$25.00 per filing transaction, concierge services can range from \$14.95 to \$79.99 per filing transaction.

Fees may be waived in some cases. ESFPs offer reduced or waived fees in cases where fee waiver orders have been previously issued by the court or for initial filings (Complaint, Answer, etc.) that are accompanied by a fee waiver application. You cannot apply to an ESFP for a fee waiver order in an existing case unless it accompanies an initial filing. In Los Angeles Superior Court, you can submit the initial

document and fee waiver application together in the same transaction. Both the initial document and the petition will be processed at the same time as the fee waiver application. If you don't qualify for a fee waiver application and can't afford to pay the separate e-filing service fees, read our guide [Options for Filing Court Documents](#) to see if you can:

File by U.S mail;

File by fax; or

File in drop-box (usually located near main entrance)

Step 6: E-File Documents: Each vendor will have a slightly different process, but many have “how to” guides or a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section on their website that will address any vendor-specific filing procedures or questions you may have for filing with the vendor you choose.

Naming the Document: LA Superior Court's civil e-filing guide (available online at http://www.lacourt.org/division/efiling/pdf/Civilefiling_FAQ.pdf), states:

“A Filing Document Name refers to the type of filing (e.g. answer, demurrer, motion, etc.) and is used by the 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 at <http://www.lacourt.org>. . . .

“If the document you are filing is not specified in the list of document names, you must use the name of the 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. For example, use “Motion (Name Extension)” or “Brief (Name Extension)” and add the specific title of your document. There is also a “comments” field if you need to include any additional explanation for the filing staff.”

Lastly, the guide stresses the importance of designating a “lead document” when filing multiple documents electronically at one time.

“If multiple documents are filed in one transaction, the lead document is the one that is most important. For example, if you were filing a motion with a supporting declaration and a proof of service, the motion would be the lead document. It is important to properly identify the lead document as this will affect the priority and timing for processing by the Court and ensures that the document is directed to the appropriate location or court personnel.”

Choosing the incorrect document type may lead the court to reject the filing.

However, the court will usually indicate the reason for rejection and, in most cases, a corrected version of the document may be submitted.

Certain civil documents cannot be e-filed at this time (as of 7/31/2020). Documents excluded from e-filing include:

Peremptory challenges or challenges for cause of a judicial officer pursuant to <i>Code of Civil Procedure Sections 170.6 or 170.3</i>
Bonds/undertaking documents
Trial and evidentiary hearing exhibits
Any ex parte application filed concurrently with a new complaint, including those that will be assigned to the Writs and Receivers departments in the Stanley Mosk Courthouse.
Documents submitted conditionally under seal. The actual motion or application shall be electronically filed. A courtesy copy of the electronically filed motion or application to submit documents conditionally under seal must be provided with the documents submitted conditionally under seal and delivered directly to the courtroom to which the case is assigned

Certain probate documents cannot be e-filed at this time (as of 7/31/2020).

Documents that cannot be e-filed include:

Peremptory challenges or challenges for cause of a judicial officer
Testamentary instruments (wills and codicils), letters, original trust documents, bond/undertaking documents
Trial and hearing exhibits
Documents filed in civil cases that are related for handling in the probate division
Lodged documents
Pace forms for Appointment or Reimbursement

For more information on Civil e-filing, please see the following links from the Los Angeles Superior Court website:

- http://www.lacourt.org/division/efiling/pdf/Civilefiling_FAQ.pdf
- http://www.lacourt.org/division/efiling/pdf/Civil_efiling_Tips_for_Reducing_Rejections.pdf

For more information on Probate e-filing, visit:

- http://www.lacourt.org/division/efiling/pdf/Efiling_FAQ.pdf.

For a list of court-approved e-filing vendors, click here:

- http://www.lacourt.org/division/efiling/civil_providers.aspx