

Los Angeles Superior Court
Probate Efiling FAQs

1. Once I electronically file a document, what is the typical turnaround time for processing?

Turnaround time will depend on type of document filed; however, 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 will not take 24 hours to process. In these instances, you may receive your document back as having been "received," but not yet "filed."

2. What are the filing hours for efilings?

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

3. What are typical return reasons?

Typical reasons that your filing would be rejected by the court are as follows:

- *Incorrect court location selected*
- *Incorrect case category and/or case type selected*
- *Incorrect payment account option selected (i.e., fee waiver)*
- *Party's name listed in the Party Name field does not match the party's name listed on the document for initial documents only*
- *Incorrect party type selected*
- *Party's address listed in Party Address fields do not match the party's address listed on the document for initial documents only*
- *Incorrect filing code is selected*
- *Incorrect filing document or key information is missing*
- *Illegible document submitted*
- *Missing filed documents*
- *Multiple filing documents are submitted as a single filing code*

4. Why do I have to register as an electronic filer?

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. Once you select an electronic filing service provider (EFSP), you do not need to re-register for any other EFSP you may choose to use. You will be able to use your existing username and password for any EFSP.

5. What Electronic Filing Service Provider (EFSP) can I use?

You may choose to utilize any EFSP that is listed on the court's website or the Odyssey efileCA website.

6. How will I know what Judge my Petition is assigned to?

A new filing receives the assigned case number, a hearing date and judicial assignment upon acceptance of the filing. This information will be stamped on the face of the Petition.

7. Where is the File 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 efiler through the system.

8. What happens if I select the wrong filing location?

Your electronically filed document will be rejected and returned to you through the Efiling system for correction and resubmission with the proper filing location indicated.

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9. Can I ask to send a confirmation email to another party / person?

Yes, the system will 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. Pursuant to California Rules of Court, rule 2.251, a party must provide consent to be served electronically.

10. Do I need to submit a courtesy copy?

In certain instances, and pursuant to Los Angeles Superior Court Local Rule and/or General Order, a courtesy copy must be submitted to the court on the same day the document is electronically filed.

- *If a document is over 25 pages*
- *If an opposition to an ex parte is filed after 4:00p.m.*
- *If a document is filed within two (2) days from hearing date (except an ex parte)*

11. 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. Generally, credit cards and electronic checks are accepted.

12. 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.

13. What is an “envelope”?

An envelope contains a document or group of documents for a single file code for a single case number, or a group of documents for multiple filing codes, that will be processed in one transaction for one single case number.

14. What is “bookmarking” of exhibits?

Bookmarking of exhibits 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.

15. 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 returned to the efiler via an attachment to an email using the email address provided on the document.

16. Can the court electronically serve (eserve) other parties for me?

No, at this time the court will not electronically serve other parties on behalf of another party. Pursuant to California Rules of Court, rule 2.251, a party must provide consent to be served electronically.

17. I am an attorney; do I have to efile?

For Probate cases, attorneys are required to electronically file all documents (with exceptions) beginning June 5, 2017. A permissive date of May 1, 2017 allows for a transitional period prior to the mandatory efilings date. Exceptions to electronically filing documents include:

- *Peremptory challenges or challenges for cause of a judicial officer*
- *Testamentary instruments (wills and codicils), letters, original trust documents, bond/undertaking documents*

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- *Trial and hearing exhibits*
- *Documents filed in civil cases that are related for handling in the probate division*
- *Lodged documents*

18. 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.

19. Is there a cost to efile?

Yes, there is a cost to efile. In addition to the court filing fees, there is an efile fee which is a service fee to use the efilings system. Also, depending on the method of payment you choose, there is also a payment service fee to cover processing cost. Both the efile fee and the payment service fee are not costs charged by the court and are collected by the electronic filing service provider (EFSP).

20. Are my electronically filed 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 68150(a).

21. What is the cut-off time for efilings my ex parte documents?

If filing an ex parte electronically, the documents must be electronically filed no later than 10:00a.m. the day before the hearing. If filing an objection to an ex parte, the documents must be electronically filed no later than 2:00p.m. the day before the hearing.

22. I efiled my ex parte documents; do I have to appear?

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

23. How do I submit documents exempt from efilings?

Documents that are exempt from efilings can be submitted for filing in the Clerk's Office of the Probate Division between the office hours of 8:30a.m. and 4:30p.m or by mail.

24. Where can I find more information about the services offered by the EFSPs?

Information about services offered by individual EFSPs can be found on their direct website. A list of EFSPs can be found on the court's website or on the Odyssey efileCA website.

25. Where do I go to file an objection or opposition to an ex parte? *Objections or oppositions to an ex parte must be electronically filed by 8:30a.m. on the day of the hearing. If the objection or opposition is filed after 4:00p.m. the day before the hearing, courtesy copies must also be submitted to the court.*

26. How does efilings work?

Electronic filing of court documents occurs through an electronic filing service provider (EFSP). The user creates an account and the efilings system manages the flow of the documents and fees to and from the court. The filer will submit the documents, the court will accept or reject the documents, and the documents are returned to the filer through the electronic filing portal. When accepted, the documents will be returned with either an electronically file date/time stamp or a received date/time stamp.

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27. How do I get started?

The Odyssey efileCA website offers additional information, including more frequently asked questions and a list of EFSPs, to help you get started.

28. Is efilng the same as fax filing?

No, electronic filing is not the same as fax filing. For efilng, the filing party must use an electronic filing service provider (EFSP) and will submit their documents for filing over the internet.

29. Can I use my personal computer to efile?

Yes, you can submit filings through an electronic filing service provider (EFSP). You will be using 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.

30. Can I use an electronic filing service provider to electronically serve other parties?

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

31. What are rules or guidelines for electronic service?

Refer to California Rules of Court, Rule 2.251 and Civil Code of Procedure section 1010.6

32. 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.

33. What date will my document be "Filed" if I efile after 5:00 p.m.?

Pursuant to Local Rule, the court will honor the filing date through 11:59 p.m. the day a document is electronically submitted unless the document is rejected.

34. Do I have to register with an electronic filing service provider (EFSP)?

Yes, you must use an electronic service provider (EFSP) and registration will be required. You may choose the EFSP that best meets your needs. Once you register with one EFSP you can use the same username and password for all EFSP's. You only have to register once and may use any EFSP thereafter.

35. Can I change electronic service provider after I have chosen and registered with one?

Yes, you may choose any electronic service provider and may change provider. It is similar to using an "attorney service" for your filings, except the types of filings processed are electronic.

36. Do I have to use an electronic filing service provider?

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, www.lacourt.org

37. 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.

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38. 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 court, the filing party may use /s/ followed by the name of the individual on the signature line of a document.

39. In what format should I submit my proposed order?

The Local Rule requires a PDF version of a proposed order to be submitted.

40. 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.

41. Should a document be password protected?

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

42. Can Judicial Council forms be efiled?

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

43. 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. When it is reasonable to submit a document that is text searchable, you should.

44. Are documents available to the public upon submission, or upon processing?

A filing party may view documents submitted immediately through their electronic filing service provider's (EFSP) portal. All other parties will be able to view a document upon processing on public terminals located at any Los Angeles County courthouse.

45. Does the court have a policy regarding documents filed 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 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.

46. How will I receive a copy of my proposed order?

The signed order will be electronically served back to the submitting party.

47. How do I efile an Initial Petition with an original Will?

Efile the initiating document along with applicable fees. Submit the Original Will on the same day of the electronic submission in person or by mail.

48. Will new petitions be scheduled for hearing within a specific time period?

Yes, generally new petitions will be scheduled within 10 weeks. We will automatically schedule hearings, therefore absent good cause and a granted continuance, individual attorney schedules will not be accommodated for hearing purposes.

49. Do court appointed attorneys have to efile and pay the convenience fee for electronic filing?

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

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50. What if I can't attend the hearing date provided?

The clerk's office will no longer check for attorney availability to accommodate requests for a specific hearing date. If there is good cause, a party may submit a request for continuance for court consideration.

51. Can I submit an Initial Petition with a Fee Waiver Application?

Yes, the initiating document and Petition will be processed together.

52. Can I electronically file a Confidential Document?

Yes, the system allows you to indicate a document security level. Upon clerk review, the security level will be verified.

53. 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 stamped, self-addressed stamped envelope. In the future, the court will be certifying documents electronically. The Government Code allows all of the institutions, including banks, to accept electronically certified documents from the court.

54. How will Letters be processed?

Efiling will not change the manner in which Letters are processed. The original Letters containing original attestation signature shall be submitted in person or by mail. If submitted by mail, include a pre-paid method of return, such as a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

55. How do I submit a Safekeeping Will?

Do not electronically file; submit in person or by mail.

56. Will the Judge see original documents that are not efiled, such as a Will?

Judicial Officers will continue to consider all documents regardless of method of submission.

57. How do I pay for the delivery of a Will on a case wherein the estate of a decedent may be administered? (Prob. Code 8200)

Pursuant to GC 70626(d), the \$50 fee can be paid at the time the copy of the Will is filed. When the original Will is submitted to the Court, include confirmation of the efiled Petition.

58. When is the deadline for an ex parte to be filed? Is it different for a self-represented litigant?

All parties shall file ex parte applications by 10:00 a.m. the day before the ex parte.

59. What should I bring to the ex parte hearing?

The proposed order shall be brought to court the morning of the ex parte. A courtesy copy shall be brought for any Opposition filed after 4:00 p.m. the day before the ex parte.

60. Is a courtesy copy of the opposition to ex parte required?

A courtesy copy of the Opposition is only required if the Opposition is efiled after 4:00 p.m. the day before the ex parte.