

Lehigh County Clerk of Judicial Records

Civil Division
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Guidelines for E-Filing through Odyssey File & Serve (OFS) – Family Court

The Clerk of Judicial Records will follow the below listed guidelines to process your Electronic filings in a timely manner. In the event your filing is rejected, it will be mandatory for the filer to make the necessary changes and resubmit. The official date and time will be the date and time of a correct resubmission, not the date and time of the earlier rejected submission. These guidelines are merely to simplify the E-filing process and do not cover every filing scenario.

If you are in need of additional assistance on submitting Electronic Filings please review the E-File User Guide at <https://pennsylvania.tylertech.cloud/ofswb>. You may contact the Family Court Office Support at OFSFamilySupport@lehighcounty.org regarding Lehigh County Family E-Filing Procedures or for any issues regarding a filing you can contact OFSCivilSupport@lehighcounty.org

PLEASE MAKE SURE TO REVIEW ALL THE BELOW INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDELINES:

1. When filing a document in OFS, please verify the following information:
 - Case number
 - Caption (the caption on your document should match the caption as it appears in Odyssey Case Manager System - Case Summary)
 - Document must be titled listing the nature of the document (Complaint for Custody, Petition for Modification, etc.)
 - Document must contain a digitized signature or the name of the filer preceded by /s/ accompanied by the attorney/self-represented litigant's printed name.
 - Image submitted is required to have a 3-inch margin at the top of the page for timestamp and other official use.
 - Image submitted by filer must be in PDF format and legible.

2. When filing a Proposed Order or Scheduling Order in OFS, please verify the following information:
 - Case number
 - Case caption
 - If within the Proposed Order you use specific language as “Within”, “Annexed” or “Attached”, please make sure the items mentioned in the Order are attached.
3. The case caption shall only be modified by the following pleadings:
 - Amended Complaint
 - Court Order
 - Stipulation approved by the Court
4. When entering party information/ party address information use upper and lower case letters. **Do not** use any punctuation (e.g., periods, hyphens, apostrophe, etc.). A hyphen may be used when entering a business name.
5. While filing a Praecepto to Reinstate a Complaint your lead document will be your Praecepto. Your previously time stamped Complaint will be filed as an Attachment.
6. When filing multiple documents, each document should be filed as a Lead Document but should be filed in **ONE** envelope. For example, when filing a Petition for Modification, Scheduling Order and Affidavit of Service, the documents are filed in **ONE** envelope, but as 3 separate Lead Documents. Every Lead Document appears as its own event in Odyssey Case Manager.
7. Exhibits that can be e-filed **should be included** with the Lead Document **UNLESS** the exhibits are Notes of Testimony or Depositions. Notes of Testimony or Depositions that have been previously filed but are being attached to a “new” filing as an exhibit, should be filed as another lead document. The filing code that should be selected is Exhibits-Notes of Testimony/Deposition.
8. When scanning documents to file, make sure the documents are clear and do not appear upside down. If this happens, the document may be rejected.
9. Certificate of Service should be E-filed once service has been made.
10. Interested Party filings you must select either the plaintiff or defendant as the filing party. The necessary adjustments will be made by the Clerk of Judicial Records when the Petition or Motion is accepted.
11. All Petitions must include a Scheduling Order, Criminal History Verification, Praecepto for Self-Representation/Address Change (if applicable), and Public Access Policy Documents.

Procedure for Stipulation and Proposed Order:

-Stipulations must be e-filed before they can be submitted for Court approval. A Proposed Order requesting the Stipulation be made an Order of Court must be submitted as a separate Lead Document. However, the Proposed Order should be submitted with the Stipulation for filing in **one envelope**. Your Proposed Order **should not** include language such as “within stipulation”, “annexed stipulation” or “attached stipulation”.

DO NOT ADD A SIGNATURE LINE TO THE STIPULATION FOR THE JUDGE TO SIGN. THE ORDER MUST BE A SEPARATE DOCUMENT FROM THE STIPULATION.

Once your filing has been accepted by Clerk of Judicial Records, the OFS System will send a notification to Family Court Administration that a stipulation has been filed. You do **not** need to e-mail Family Court Administration a copy of stipulation and proposed order.

Procedure for E-Filing a Rule to Show Cause with a Pleading:

When e-filing a Motion/Petition, Brief or Memorandum, and Certificate of Service, you would file each document as a Lead Document using the appropriate filing code, however, all documents should be submitted for filing in **one envelope**.

-The Rule to Show Cause will be located on www.lccpa.org.

-You will need to contact the Family Court Office to receive a date, once the date is received you will fill out your rule, and create a PDF from that document. The Judge’s signature will be electronically applied once it is received and approved.

In the filings tab please enter the following:

Select Filing Code

- Filing Code = Select the proper filing code that pertains to the type of Motion you are filing (ex.: Petition for Modification)
- Filing Description = Title on your document (ex.: Defendant John Doe’s Petition for Modification)
- Click to Browse = Upload your Petition

Select “Add Another Filing”

- Filing Code = Rule to Show Cause
- Filing Description = Title on your document (ex.: Rule to Show Cause)
- Click to Browse = Upload your Rule

Procedure for E-Filing a Qualified Domestic Relations Order (QDRO)

In the filings tab please enter the following:

Select Filing Code

- Filing Code = Select Proposed QDRO
- Filing Description = Title on your document
- Click to Browse = Upload your QDRO

The QDRO will be signed by the Judge, and electronically filed by their staff.

If you wish the QDRO to be sealed, you must Motion the Court **after** you receive your certified copies from the Clerk of Judicial Records Office.

Procedure for E-Filing Motion/Petition and Responses to Motion/Petition:

When e-filing a Motion, Brief or Memorandum, Certificate of Service, Notice of Presentation of Motion (If Applicable) and Proposed Order, you would file each document as a Lead Document however all documents should be submitted for filing in **one envelope**. **YOUR PROPOSED ORDER SHOULD BE FILED AS A SEPARATE DOCUMENT WITHIN THE SAME ENVELOPE.** This procedure should also be followed when filing a Response to a Motion/Petition.

In the filings tab please enter the following:

Select Filing Code

- Filing Code = Select the proper filing code that pertains to the type of Motion you are filing (ex.: Petition for Modification)
- Filing Description = Title on your document (ex.: Defendant John Doe’s Petition for Modification)
- Click to Browse = Upload your Petition

Select “Add Another Filing”

- Filing Code = Brief (if required by Local Rules)
- Filing Description = Title on your document (ex.: Brief of Defendant John Doe in Support of Petition for Modification)
- Click to Browse = Upload your Brief

Select “Add Another Filing”

- Filing Code = Affidavit (if your certificate of service is a separate document)
- Filing Description = Title on your document (ex.: Affidavit/Certificate of Service)
- Click to Browse = Upload your Affidavit

Select “Add Another Filing”

- Filing Code = Notice of Presentation of Motion (If Applicable)
- Filing Description = Title on your document (ex.: Notice of Presentation)
- Click to Browse = Upload your Notice

Select “Add Another Filing”

- Filing Code = Proposed Order or Scheduling Order
- Filing Description = Proposed Order or Scheduling Order
- Click to Browse = Upload Proposed Order or Scheduling Order

*****If you filing contains a Counterclaim/New Matter with a Petition for Contempt, Modification or Special/Emergency Relief you will need to add the Optional Services to be charged the filing fee for the appropriate Motion/Petition.**

Once your filing has been accepted by Clerk of Judicial Records, the OFS System will send a notification to Family Court Administration that a Petition/Motion or Stipulation has been filed. You do **not** need to e-mail Family Court Administration a copy of your accepted filings.

How to E-File a Divorce Complaint

1. Case Information

- Location = Civil
- Category = Family
- Case Type = Divorce
- Filing Attorney/Party = Select Filing Attorney's name or enter Self Represented Litigant's name
- Payment Account = Select Payment Account

2. Parties

- Enter all Party Information

3. Filings

- Filing Code = Complaint for Divorce
- Filing Description = Divorce Complaint
- Optional Services – Select the appropriate number of Divorce Counts and Custody Count if applicable. (Please see the Lehigh County Civil Fee Schedule for chargeable counts) [Lehigh County Civil Fee Schedule](#)
- Click to Browse = Attach Divorce Complaint and Notice to Defend (If applicable)

How to E-File a Custody Complaint:

1. Case Information

- Location = Civil
- Category = Family
- Case Type = Custody/Visitation
- Filing Attorney/Party = Select Filing Attorney's name or enter Self Represented Litigant's name
- Payment Account = Select Payment Account

2. Parties

- Enter all Party Information (Parties must be parents, grandparents, or a guardian of the child(ren))

3. Select Filing Code

- Filing Code = Complaint for Custody
- Filing Description = Custody Complaint
- Click to Browse = Attach Custody Complaint

Select Add Another Filing

- Filing Code = Scheduling Order
- Filing Description = Scheduling Order
- Click to Browse = Attach Scheduling Order

Select Add Another Filing

- Filing Code = Praeceptum for Appearance (If an Attorney is filing)

- Filing Description =Praecipe for Appearance
- Click to Browse = Attach Praecipe for Appearance

Select Add Another Filing

- Filing Code =Affidavit of Criminal History Record
- Filing Description =Affidavit
- Click to Browse = attach Affidavit of Criminal History Record

Select Add Another Filing

- Filing Code =Praecipe for Self-Representation (if filing Pro Se)
- Filing Description =Praecipe for Self-Representation
- Click to Browse = Attach Praecipe for Self-Representation

Add Public Access Policy Documents as described below.

Public Access Policy and Electronic Filing:

1. The **Certificate of Compliance** required by the Public Access Policy **should be directly attached to each pleading** that you are electronically filing and **should not be its own filing.**

2. When filing a redacted pleading with the Confidential Information Form, you will have two lead documents within the same envelope.

- IE: Petition for Emergency Relief (redacted)
- Filing Code = Petition for Emergency Relief
 - Click to Browse = Attach (redacted) Petition

Select “Add Another Filing”

- Filing Code= Confidential Information Form
- Click to Browse= Attach Confidential Information Form

3. When filing a Confidential Document Form (a type of document specifically described in Section 8.0 of the Public Access Policy)

- IE: Financial Source Documents
- Filing Code = Financial Source Documents
 - Click to Browse=Attach Financial Source Documents

Select “Add Another Filing”

- Filing Code= Confidential Document Form
- Click to Browse= Attach Confidential Information Form