Lehigh County eFiling FAQs

General

Where/what can I e-file in Lehigh County?

The Lehigh County e-filing site, **File & Serve**, is https://pennsylvania.tylertech.cloud.ofsweb.

Civil – Effective March 19, 2018, except as specifically exempted by the Court, electronic filing is mandatory in all new and pending Civil case types and liens.

Family Court – Effective January 1, 2020, except as specifically exempted by the Court, electronic filing is mandatory in all new and pending Family Court case types. **This does not include Protection from Abuse cases**.

Register of Wills – Effective February 15, 2023, except as specifically exempted by the Court, electronic filing is mandatory in all new and pending Register of Wills case types.

Orphans' Court – Effective April 1, 2023, except as specifically exempted by the Court, electronic filing is mandatory in all new and pending Orphans' Court case types. **At this time, the case types of Adoption, Parental Termination/Voluntary Relinquishment, and Electro Convulsive Therapy are not available for e-filing.**

Are filing/registration instructions available online?

On the home page of https://pennsylvania.tylertech.cloud/ofsweb, under **Self-Help** you will find filing, registration, and firm admin instructions, OFS Guidelines for all case categories, FAQ's, Terms and Conditions, Lehigh County's efiling Rules, and also recorded webinar training sessions.

In addition, when signed on to https://pennsylvania.tylertech.cloud/ofsweb, you may select the button titled **Show Me How To**, which is located at the top of the screen. Here you will find instructions regarding filing and administrative functions, such as starting a new case or adding a payment account. Selecting a topic launches interactive instructions for each function.

Can I view the Court dockets through File & Serve?

The Court dockets are viewed through https://publicaccess.lehighcounty.org. An Attorney Docket Access or Online Records account is required to view the dockets. This account is separate from File & Serve.

How do I obtain an Attorney Docket Access account?

Active members of the Pennsylvania Bar Association are entitled to apply for an Attorney Docket Access account at no charge. Attorney Docket Access accounts allow viewing of the Court dockets but do not include Tax or Assessment records. Please visit the Attorney Docket Access page at https://www.lehighcounty.org to register.

How do I obtain a paid subscription to Online Records Access?

One-year subscriptions to Online Records Access which includes Court dockets, judgments, Taxes, and Assessment records, are available. The yearly subscription cost is $300.00. To create an account, please visit the Online Records Access page at https://www.lehighcounty.org. You may access the dockets through ORA. For more information regarding paid subscriptions, please contact the Lehigh County Fiscal Office at 610-782-3112.

When a document is e-filed in Lehigh County, are all parties to the case automatically notified?

File & Serve only sends submission/acceptance/rejection notifications to the filer who submitted the documents. Any docketable filings may be viewed on the case through https://publicaccess.lehighcounty.org.

Service according to the rules of Civil procedure still applies to all filings. When using E-file & Serve, all service contacts on the case which have been enabled will receive a service e-mail after the filing has been accepted. See the next question for more information regarding electronic service.

What is the procedure for electronic service (E-file & Serve)?

When e-filing any document other than original process in Civil or Family cases, the following procedures shall be followed commencing October 1, 2022:
When attorneys or pro se parties e-file a document, the Odyssey system will default to "e-file and serve" rather than to "e-file." This will constitute good service under the Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure and the Lehigh County Rules of Procedure.

Attorneys and parties must keep their email addresses up to date with the Clerk of Judicial Records ("COJR") and will be e-served at that email address. If their email address changes, they must file a Change Of Address form with COJR. The email address on record with COJR are that attorney or party's record address for service purposes. Neither a Judge, nor Court Administration, nor Family Court Administration can change the record address of an attorney or party. In addition to the above, attorneys and parties must keep their regular mailing addresses up to date with COJR as their record mailing addresses.

Is there a fee to use File & Serve?

If your filing does not have a filing fee, there is no additional fee to use File & Serve. If you are paying with a credit/debit card, Section 5.1 of the Terms of Services lists the credit card convenience fee per transaction for any filings with filing fees. If you are paying by eCheck, there is a $0.25 service fee per envelope.

- Civil/Family Court Fee Schedule
- Register of Wills Fee Schedule
- Orphans' Court Fee Schedule

What payment types are accepted?

Credit/Debit cards are accepted for all filings. Section 5.1 of the Terms of Services lists the credit card convenience fee per transaction.

Effective April 1, 2023, eCheck will be available as an additional form of payment for all e-filers in the Civil Division and Register of Wills Division of the Clerk of Judicial Records. Payment by eCheck is available to attorney/agency e-filers in Orphans' Court Division, but not to non-lawyer individual e-filers. The convenience fee for payment by eCheck is .25/envelope.

Registration/Accounts

I need assistance with my Attorney Docket Access account

For password resets/forgotten credentials – please visit the Attorney Docket Access page at http://www.lehighcounty.org and select the **Password Reset** option. From this page you may reset your password or retrieve your username. A link to reset your password will be sent to e-mail address associated with your attorney record in the Courts' Case Management system. For further assistance, please contact attorneydocketaccess@lehighcounty.org.

How do I obtain an account for File & Serve?

Attorneys

If you are an attorney, and your firm already has an account, your firm administrator can send you an e-mail with a link to join the firm.

If your firm does not have an account, please select **Register Now** on the home page. When registering, choose to register as a firm. Solo practitioners also register as a firm account so that you may link your attorney record. An activation e-mail will be sent from no-reply@efilingmail.tylertech.cloud. If you do not receive this e-mail, please check spam/junk mail folders or contact File & Serve support at 1-800-297-5377 to determine why the e-mail was not received. Some firms need to have their IT support whitelist no-reply@efilingmail.tylertech.cloud to receive the e-mail.

Independent Filers/Pro Se

If you are a pro se filer or independent filer, please select Register Now on the home page. When registering, choose to register as an Independent Filer. An activation e-mail will be sent from no-reply@efilingmail.tylertech.cloud. If you do not receive this e-mail, please check spam/junk mail folders or contact File & Serve support at 1-800-297-5377 to determine why the e-mail was not received.

Are there password requirements for File & Serve?

Passwords must be 8 characters in length and must contain at least one upper-case character, one lower-case character, and one number.

When registering an attorney, I receive a message stating that the attorney is not found or that the Bar ID is invalid.

Please verify that you are entering the PA Bar ID in a seven-digit format (ex: 0123456) with leading zeros. If you still receive this message it is likely that the attorney record is not present in the Courts' case management system. Please contact the Clerk of Judicial Records – Civil Division at 610-782-3148 to have the attorney record added. You may also choose to e-mail at OFSCivilSupport@lehighcounty.org. Civil Division will need the following information:

- Name
- Address
- Phone Number
- E-mail address
- PA Bar ID

I have forgotten my password.

Select the **Forgot Password** link. You will be asked to provide the e-mail address associated with your account and also complete the reCAPTCHA. A reset password e-mail will be sent to you. If you do not receive the reset password e-mail, or if you receive a message that your account has been locked due to unsuccessful login attempts, please contact File & Serve support at 1-800-297-5377.

Firm Administration Functions

I need to add/remove a payment account.

Select **Payment Accounts** from the Actions menu. To add a new credit/debit card or a checking account select **Add Payment Account**. You may add multiple cards and/or checking accounts to a firm. Visa, Master Card, Discover, and American Express are accepted. To remove an expired credit/debit card or a checking account, highlight the payment account and choose **Delete** from the Actions menu.

I need to remove a user who is no longer with our firm.

Select **Firm Users** from the Actions menu. Highlight the user to be removed and select **Remove User** from the Actions menu. Save Changes when complete.

I need to remove an attorney who is no longer with our firm.

Select **Firm Attorneys** from the Actions menu. Highlight the attorney to be removed and select **Remove Attorney** from the Actions menu. Save Changes when complete.

How do I transfer an attorney's e-filing account to a new firm in OFS?

As File & Serve uses the e-mail address as an account, you would register as a new filer/attorney in the new firm. The previous firm should delete the prior registration. If you encounter issues, please contact File & Serve support at 1-800-297-5377.

How do we change/remove/add firm administrators?

If you wish to change and/or add a firm admin, the user who is currently firm admin should log on to https://pennsylvania.tylertech.cloud/ofsweb and do the following:

- To grant firm admin permissions to another user – On the home page, select the orange actions menu and select **Firm Users** under the firm admin section. Highlight the username of the user you wish to be firm admin. Select "Firm Admin" under the roles section. Save changes when finished. The next time this user logs on, he/she will now have firm admin permissions.

- To remove firm admin permissions from a user – Go back to the **Firm Users** section and uncheck "Firm Admin" from the account you no longer wish to have access.

If you encounter issues with any of the above, please contact File & Serve support at 1-800-297-5377.

Filing

I am unsure which case type/filing code I should use.

When filing a new Civil case, please select the same case type you would choose on the Civil coversheet. The **OFS Guidelines** documents under **Self Help** provide instructions for various filings for Civil, Family Court, Orphans' Court and Register of Wills.

For questions regarding **Civil** filings, please contact OFSCivilSupport@lehighcounty.org.
For questions regarding **Family Court** filings, please contact OFSFamilySupport@lehighcounty.org.
For questions regarding **Orphans' Court** filings, please contact OFSOrphansCourtSupport@lehighcounty.org.
For questions regarding **Register of Wills** filings, please contact OFSWillsSupport@lehighcounty.org.

When I search for my case, I see it is unavailable for e-filing.

If your case or lien displays that it is unavailable for e-filing and is not a Protection Order case, please contact the appropriate support e-mail for assistance. Please include the case number in the e-mail.

Are there filing requirements/exceptions?

The **OFS Guidelines** documents under **Self Help** provide instructions for various filings for Civil, Family Court, Orphans' Court and Register of Wills.

The Courts' website, https://www.lccpa.org, has a Self Help Center. This site provides answers to some commonly asked questions concerning legal procedures in Pennsylvania, including Child Custody, Divorce, Name Changes and other general information for pro se parties. This site does not provide legal advice. Court staff cannot provide legal advice. Any forms provided in the Self-Help Center are specific to Lehigh County.

For questions regarding **Civil** filings, please contact OFSCivilSupport@lehighcounty.org.
For questions regarding **Family Court** filings, please contact OFSFamilySupport@lehighcounty.org.
For questions regarding **Orphans' Court** filings, please contact OFSOrphansCourtSupport@lehighcounty.org.
For questions regarding **Register of Wills** filings, please contact OFSWillsSupport@lehighcounty.org.

Is there a recommended size limit for filings in the envelope?

For optimal manageability, the court recommends that document size for filings does not exceed 25 MB per document and 35 MB per envelope.

How can I view a time-stamped copy of the document which was e-filed?

Time-stamped copies of filed documents are available from your filing history for 45 days. Go to your **Accepted Filings**. From the Actions menu next to your filing, select **View Filing Details**. Scroll down to the Stamped Documents section and select Download. Under Lead Document, you can also download a copy of the original file (the filing prior to the time-stamp) and the Court Copy (the filing with the time-stamp). Docketable filings may be viewed on the case through https://publicaccess.lehighcounty.org.

How do I add a new party or attorney during a subsequent filing?

The Clerk of Judicial Records – Civil or Register of Wills Division, or Orphans' Court, will add the new party or attorney to the Courts' case management system based upon the filing. You may mention the new party in the Filing Comments in the Filings section.

Electronic Service (E-file & Serve)

What is the procedure for electronic service (E-file & Serve)?

When e-filing any document other than original process in Civil or Family cases, the following procedures shall be followed commencing October 1, 2022:
When attorneys or pro se parties e-file a document, the Odyssey system will default to "e-file and serve" rather than to "e-file." This will constitute good service under the Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure and the Lehigh County Rules of Procedure.

<u>Attorneys and parties must keep their email addresses up to date with the Clerk of Judicial Records</u> ("COJR") and will be e-served at that email address. If their email address changes, they must file a Change Of Address form with COJR. The email address on record with COJR are that attorney or party's record address for service purposes. Neither a Judge, nor Court Administration, nor Family Court Administration can change the record address of an attorney or party. In addition to the above, attorneys and parties must keep their regular mailing addresses up to date with COJR as their record mailing addresses.

How to manage Service Contacts:

Adding a New Service Contact

Select **Service Contacts** from the Actions menu. Select **Add Service Contact** and complete all information. The e-mail address will be the one used to receive any service e-mails. Enable Make Contact Public if you wish to have this service contact appear in the public list.

Deleting a Service Contact

Select **Service Contacts** from the Actions menu. Next to the name of the contact you wish to delete, select the Actions menu. Select **Delete Contact**.

Adding a Service Contact to a case for the first time

To add a Service Contact to a case, select the Actions menu and choose **File Into Existing Case** to find the case number. When your case is returned, select the Actions menu next to the case and choose **View Service Contacts**. Any existing Service Contacts on this case will appear. Click on the Actions menu next to the appropriate party. If you are adding a contact from your firm, select **Add from Firm Service Contacts**.

Replacing Service Contacts on cases

If a Service Contact is no longer available in your firm, and you wish to transfer this contacts cases from one person to another, select **Service Contacts** from the Actions menu. Next to the Service Contact you wish to replace, select the Actions menu. You can view all of the cases to which this contact is attached by selecting **View Attached Case List**. To replace the contact, select **Replace Contact**. You can choose from a drop-down list of all current firm contacts, or you can add a new contact.

Troubleshooting

Error messages: "Firm does not have a payment account" or "Firm does not have a filing attorney"

A payment account and filing attorney must be configured prior to e-filing. If these messages are encountered and you are not a firm admin, please contact your firm admin for assistance. If you are a firm admin, entering at least one payment account and attorney will allow filing.

I am unable to enter a payment account

When you select the button titled Enter Account Information, a new window should open. Sometimes pop-up blocker will not allow the new window to open. Please check if pop-up blocker is not allowing the window to open.

My filing was rejected but I see a temporary authorization on my credit/debit card/checking account

Please note: Filing fee totals will be held if a filing(s) is rejected. These funds will be released, however, the length of time to reprocess varies based upon your financial institution or credit card company. If the filing is rejected and you would like to know when the funds will be deposited back into your account, please contact your financial institution or credit card company directly.

I did not receive submission/acceptance notifications.

If you are the filer who submitted the filings

Please verify that the notifications are not in your spam/junk mail folder. The notifications arrive from no-reply@efilingmail.tylertech.cloud, which may need to be whitelisted by your firm's IT support. If the notifications have not arrived and are not present in your spam/junk mail folder, please contact File & Serve support at 1-800-297-5377 for further assistance.

If you are not the filer who submitted the filings

File & Serve only sends submission/acceptance/rejection notifications via e-mail to the filer who submitted the documents. Service according to the rules of Civil procedure still applies to all filings. Any docketable filings may be viewed on the case through https://publicaccess.lehighcounty.org.

My filing is too large to submit

For optimal manageability, the court recommends that document size for filings does not exceed 25 MB per document and 35 MB per envelope.

I received a PDF error when attempting to upload a document.

OFS does not allow editable PDFs or PDFs with document security. Errors of this type will be minimized if they comply with a standard format that includes the following. For further assistance, please contact Odyssey File & Serve support at 1-800-297-5377.

- Use 8.5 x 11-inch paper with portrait orientation
- Set the DPI resolution lower than 300
- Do not use unintelligible images (i.e. all-black images)
- Use non-secured document properties (i.e. not password protected)
- Remove external references in the documents, such as URLs and shortcuts

How to “flatten” a fillable PDF

When using a PDF fillable form, such as the Coversheet, the form must lock or “flatten” the document after all fields have been completed to ensure the document can be viewed on all devices and to prevent other users from editing the information. To complete and “flatten” the form:

1) Open the fillable form
2) Complete all appropriate fields
3) Select File → Print
4) Select the PDF printer (NOTE: The Adobe PDF printer is installed automatically with Adobe Acrobat. If you do not use Adobe Acrobat, and you are unable to locate your PDF printer, please contact your firm’s IT support for assistance)
5) Select OK
6) Specify the location to save the “flattened” version of the form
7) Select Save
8) When uploading your form to OFS, choose the “flattened” version of the form

How do I submit an envelope in “draft” status?

If you have completed all sections of the envelope, at the bottom you should have two options – Save as Draft and Summary. If you select the Summary option, you will be taken to the next screen which will allow you to review your filing. At the bottom of this page, select **Submit**. You will then be given a receipt for the filing and will receive an e-mail when the filing has submitted.

The Save Changes button is greyed out on the Filings Section.

The required fields for the Filings section are Filing Type, Filing Code, and Lead Document. Once all three of these fields are filled, the Save Changes button should be enabled.

If any fields on the Filings section are outlined in red, this would indicate an issue, such as the field is required and has not yet been filled, or there is an issue with the upload.

If the PDF document does not fully upload, the Save Changes button will not be enabled. For further assistance with PDF issues, or any other filing issues, please contact File & Serve Support at 1-800-297-5377.

How to adjust a Bar ID in File & Serve to seven digits

If you have received notification from the Courts that one of the attorneys in your firm needs to have their Bar ID adjusted to be seven digits, please have your firm admin follow the below steps:

1) Log on to https://pennsylvania.tylertech.cloud/ofsweb
2) Under the orange Actions menu, please choose **Firm Attorneys** under the Firm Admin section
3) Highlight the record for Attorney _____
4) In the Attorney Number section, please re-enter the Bar ID in a seven-digit format such as 0123456
5) Select Verify
6) Save Changes

Contact Information

For account and technical assistance for https://pennsylvania.tylertech.cloud/ofsweb:

Phone: File & Serve Support – 1-800-297-5377
Email – support@odysseyfileandserve.zendesk.com

For questions regarding Lehigh County Civil e-filing procedures:

Email – OFSCivilSupport@lehighcounty.org

For questions regarding Lehigh County Family e-filing procedures:

Email – OFSFamilySupport@lehighcounty.org

For questions regarding Lehigh County Orphans' Court e-filing procedures:

Email – OFSOrphansCourtSupport@lehighcounty.org

For questions regarding Lehigh County Register of Wills e-filing procedures:

Email – OFSWillsSupport@lehighcounty.org

For questions and assistance regarding Attorney Docket Access:

Email – AttorneyDocketAccess@lehighcounty.org

To send a courtesy copy to Court Administration:

Email – OFSCourtAdminCivil@lehighcounty.org