1   eFileGA – Frequently Asked Questions

Topics Covered in this Chapter

♦ General

General

How do I access the Odyssey File & Serve system?

To access the Odyssey File & Serve website, go to eFileGA (https://efilega.tylerhost.net/).

Do I have to register to use File & Serve?

Yes, all users must register prior to using File & Serve.

What is the role of the Firm Administrator?

The Firm Administrator registers the firm and is responsible for setting up and maintaining all information for system users, credit card accounts, and attorneys at the firm.

When a new firm is registered, all users added to that firm are associated with the firm. If a firm has multiple locations, those users can be added to the original firm, but Tyler recommends that each location registers his or her location as a new firm with its own Firm Administrator. In this way, each firm's users from each location will only see their specific filings for their specific location; otherwise, users will see instead of all filings under the original firm.

How can I get a user name and password?

You can get a user name and password by registering to use File & Serve.

To register, perform the following steps:

1. Go to your *File & Serve* home page.
2. Click the **Register Now** link.
3. Complete the **File and Serve Registration Wizard**.
4. Check your e-mail inbox for an e-mail confirmation that contains your user name and password.
5. Copy and paste the password received in the e-mail confirmation when logging in to File & Serve for the first time.

ⓘ **Note: If you cannot self-register to use File & Serve, contact your Firm Administrator to get a user name and password.**

What if I forget my user name or password?

Perform the following steps to reset your password:

1. Go to your *File & Serve* home page.
2. Click the **Forgot Password?** link on the login screen.

   The **Reset Password** dialog box opens.

3. Type your e-mail address in the field provided.

4. Click **Next** .

5. Type the answer to your security question in the field provided.

6. Click **Ok** to close the dialog box.

   The login screen is displayed.

   Your password is reset, and a temporary password is sent to your e-mail address. Use the temporary password to log in and then change your password to one of your preference.

ⓘ **Note: Contact your Firm Administrator if you are unable to reset your password.**

Does my password expire or need to be changed periodically?

No. Currently, user passwords do not expire, and there is no requirement that users must periodically change their passwords.

Is support available for File & Serve?

Yes, Technical Support is available 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. CT, Monday through Friday.

Contact Tyler Technical Support at 800.297.5377, or send an e-mail to efiling. support@tylertech.com. Assistance is also available online through Support Chat.
ⓘ **Note: Support may ask to assist you by sharing your screen using GoToAssist.**

What are the computer requirements for using File & Serve?

File & Serve is a web-based system that is designed to be compatible with typical office workstations. No special setup or software installations are required to use File & Serve.

ⓘ **Note: First-time users of File & Serve may be prompted to download and install Microsoft® Silverlight.**

The recommended settings for your workstation are as follows:

- **Web Browser Requirements:** File & Serve is supported by current versions of the Windows operating system using Firefox® or Internet Explorer® 7, 8, 9, or 10.
- **Connection Requirements:** A high-speed connection is recommended.
- **Minimum Screen Resolution:** For best results, a setting of 1024x768 is recommended.

Is e-filing mandatory for my court?

Mandatory e-filing applies to civil and family (with the exception of conciliation and probate/ mental health) cases for all 11 pilot EFS counties for attorneys and government agencies.

Can I use File & Serve if I am a pro per or pro se party?

Pro per and pro se parties are currently not eligible to use the e-filing system. Pro se parties will receive documents from the court and other parties using the currently applicable paper process, whether it is by personal service or by mail.

If pro se parties request a copy of a court record, they would also use current paper methods – request and pay for a paper copy of the document either by mail or by coming to the Records Center for a copy.

Can File & Serve be used to initiate cases or to file into existing cases?

Yes, File & Serve 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.

When can I use File & Serve?

File & Serve is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
ⓘ Note: The system may be temporarily offline from time to time for maintenance purposes.
Consult your local court rules for the court review timelines and schedules.

Will I ever be automatically logged out of File & Serve?

As long as you are entering data, submitting forms, or reviewing case information in File & Serve, you will not be automatically logged out. However, File & Serve will automatically log you out after a period of system inactivity for Internet security reasons.

Why am I having difficulty viewing the entire web page on my screen?

Difficulty viewing the entire web page may be a screen resolution issue.
To resolve this issue, perform the following steps:

1. Open **Properties** on your desktop.

2. Select **Settings**.

3. Under **Screen Resolution** or **Screen Area**, slide the bar to select 1024x768 pixels.

4. Click **OK**.

Clearing the Internet Explorer Browser History

As you browse the web, a lot of the information regarding the sites you've visited is stored on your computer. This information is your browser history. If you do not want to keep a history of the sites you have visited, you can clear your browser history.

You must have an Internet Explorer browser to perform this procedure.

To clear the Internet Explorer browser history, perform the following steps:

1. Open your Internet Explorer browser.

2. Select **Tools** on the toolbar on the top of your screen.

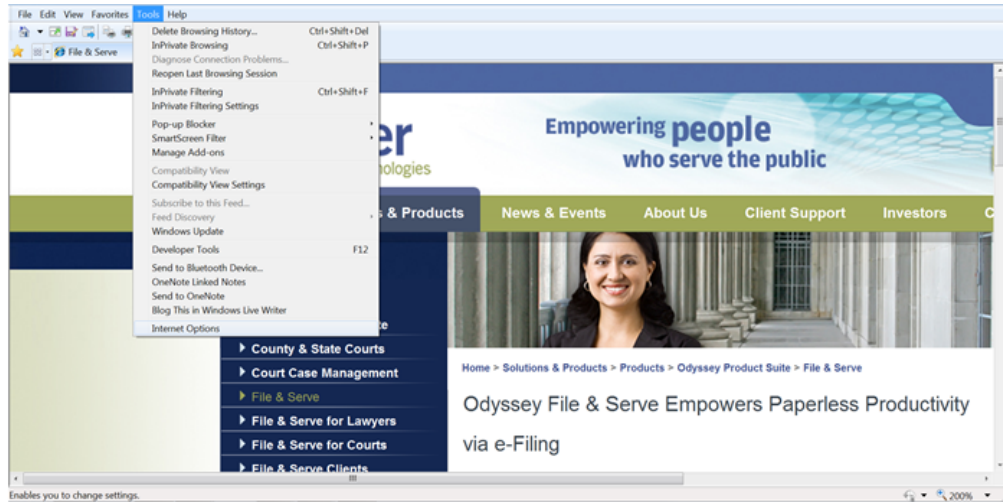   The drop-down list for **Tools** is displayed.

Figure 1.1 – Selecting Tools Menu

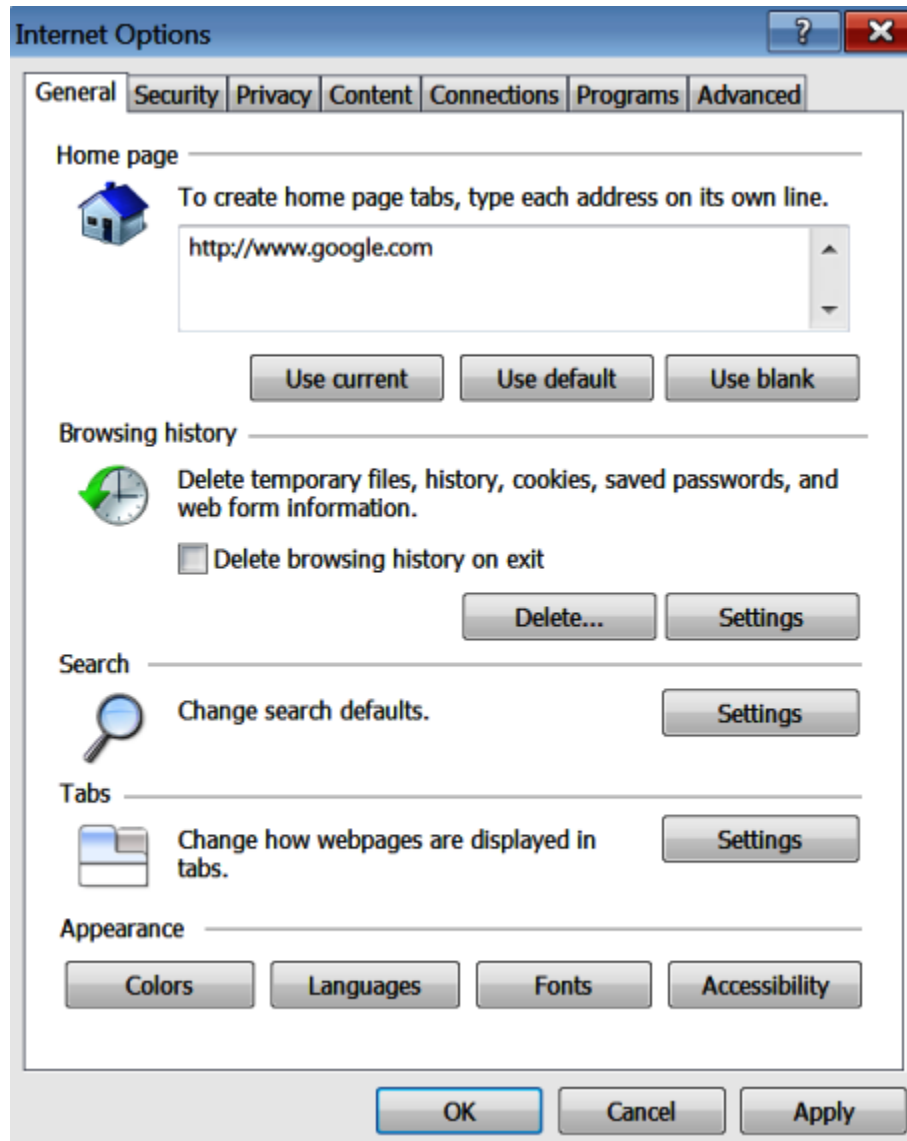3. Select **Internet Options** located at the bottom of the drop-down list.

Figure 1.2 – Internet Options Window General Tab

4. Click [Delete...].

   The **Delete Browsing History** dialog box opens.

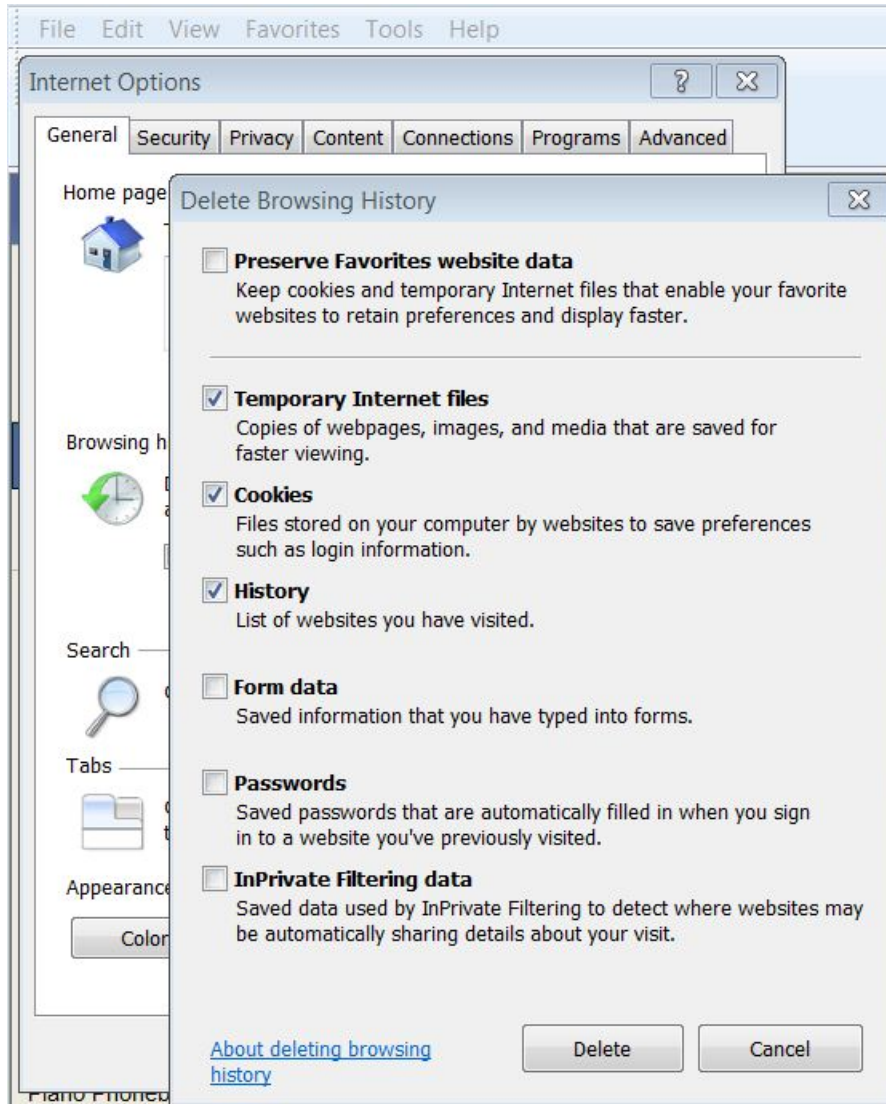**Figure 1.3 – Delete Browsing History Dialog Box**

5. Select the following check boxes:

- Temporary Internet files
- Cookies
- History

6. Click ⬚Delete...⬚ .

7. Wait as the system deletes the browsing history.

8. Click ⬚✖⬚ to close the window.

Clearing the Firefox Browser History

As you browse the web, a lot of the information regarding the sites you've visited is stored on your computer. This information is your browser history. If you do not want to keep a history of the sites you have visited, you can clear your browser history.

You must have a Firefox browser to perform this procedure.

To clear the Firefox browser history, perform the following steps:

1. Open your Firefox browser.

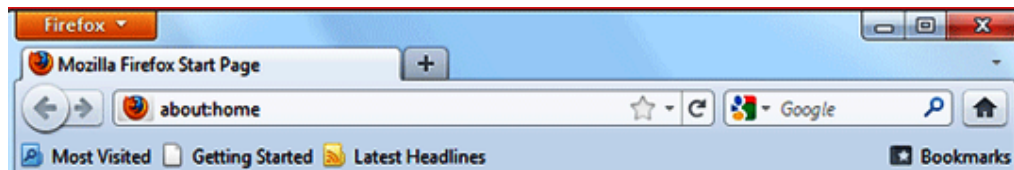2. Click **FIREFOX** at the top of the window.

Figure 1.4 – Firefox Window

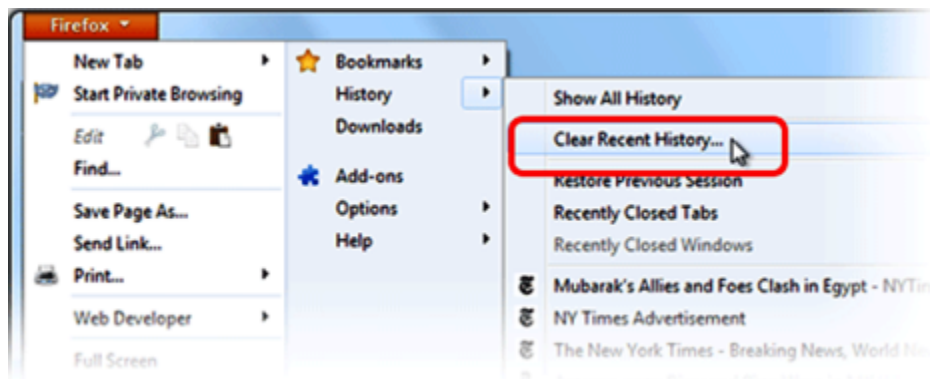   The options menu opens.

Figure 1.5 – History Options Menu

3. Select **History**.

4. Select the **Clear Recent History** option.

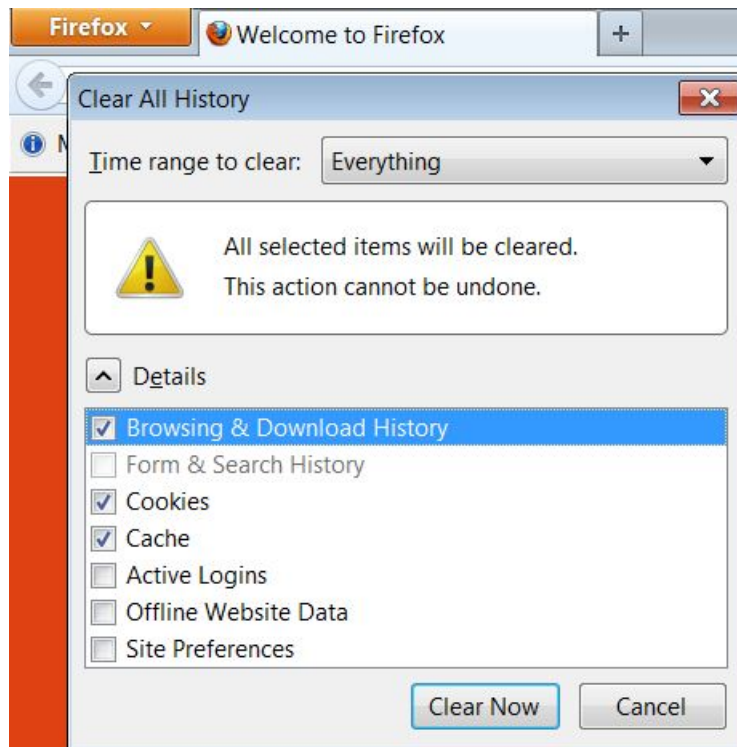   The **Clear All History** dialog box opens.

Figure 1.6 – Clear All History Dialog Box

5. Select **Everything** on the **Time range to clear:** drop-down list.

6. Select the following check boxes:

   • Browsing & Download History

   • Cookies

   • Cache

   ⓘ **Note: The options listed above are the only check boxes that should be selected. Clear all the other check boxes in the Details dialog box.**

7. Click [OK] to close the **Clear All History** dialog and to clear the browser history.

2 E-filing

Topics Covered in this Chapter

♦ What type of cases can I e-file?
♦ How do I determine the case type for the case I'm e-filing?
♦ How do I search for a case that I have filed using File & Serve?
♦ What document formats does File & Serve accept?
♦ Can scanned documents be submitted in color?
♦ Can I file multiple documents in one transaction?
♦ I have several documents to submit. What should I do?
♦ What is the maximum file size that can be electronically submitted?
♦ What if I need to withdraw an e-filing?
♦ Do I have access to the documents that I file in the system?
♦ Are hyperlinks permissible in PDF documents?
♦ Is it acceptable to use the file attachments option within a PDF document?

What type of cases can I e-file?

Different courts allow different types of cases filed electronically. Contact your local county clerk for electronic filing and serving guidelines.

How do I determine the case type for the case I'm e-filing?

Contact your local court for assistance in determining the e-filing case type.

How do I search for a case that I have filed using File & Serve?

You can search for a case by entering the exact case number assigned by your court in the **Case Number** field at the top-right corner of your screen.

Perform the following steps to search for an existing case using the court assigned case number:

1. Click **FIND CASE** at the top of the page.

2. Click the drop-down arrow to view the search options.

3. Select **Case Number**.

   File & Serve displays the phrase "Case Number" in the case search field.

   ⓘ **Note: Case numbers vary by court. The format of the case number is relative to the type of case filed.**

4. Type the exact case number assigned by your court in the **Case Number** field. No wildcards can be used in the **Case Number** field.

5. Click **Go**.

   The result screen displays the cases meeting the criteria entered in the **Case Number** field.

6. Select an icon under the **Actions** column and perform actions as necessary.

7. Click **Close** when you are done.

What document formats does File & Serve accept?

File & Serve only accepts documents in PDF or PDF-A formats.

Can scanned documents be submitted in color?

Yes, File & Serve will accept color documents. However, the preferred business process is to scan the documents in black and white.

Can I file multiple documents in one transaction?

Yes, if all of the documents pertain to the same case, multiple documents can be submitted together by selecting **Add Another Filing**. The documents will be submitted to the court in a single File & Serve envelope.

I have several documents to submit. What should I do?

The basic rule of thumb is that anything that will be docketed separately should be in its own separate PDF file.

To facilitate internal handling, the court prefers that an appendix or exhibit be created as a separate PDF document from the primary pleading and submitted as an attachment to the e-filing. Distinct documents, such as a docketing statement, should not be combined with another document into a single PDF file.

What is the maximum file size that can be electronically submitted?

For optimal manageability, the court recommends that files do not exceed 5 MB per document and 25 MB per envelope. There are practical limits to the size of an electronic document that judges and staff can quickly and easily retrieve and read within the case management system.

What if I need to withdraw an e-filing?

After a filing has been submitted but before the court's review has begun, a **Cancel** button is available for that filing in your **Filings** queue.

As long as the **Cancel** button is present, the filing has been submitted by File & Serve but has not yet been reviewed by the court. If the **Cancel** button is not available, contact your local court clerk's office.

Do I have access to the documents that I file in the system?

Yes, by using the **My Filings** feature located on the **Filings** tab, you can find and view information about electronic filings that have been submitted to File & Serve through your user name or by any member of your firm.

After a transaction is completed, you can access a PDF version of all of your filings through the system for up to 180 days.
ⓘ **Note: This PDF version is read-only; it can no longer be modified.**

Are hyperlinks permissible in PDF documents?

Internal links, which point to other places within the same document, are permissible and are accepted by File & Serve. However, external links, which point to other documents, websites, or legal sources, can be risky and must be avoided in documents submitted to the court. Use of external links can result in format errors that may prevent your document from being accepted by File & Serve.

Is it acceptable to use the file attachments option within a PDF document?

No, it is not acceptable to use the file attachment option within a PDF document. If you create a PDF document that includes embedded file attachments, a "File Format Error" message is displayed when you view the filing status after submittal. If your filing contains a format error, it will be rejected by the system. The rejection reason is available through the **Envelope Details** screen. Click to view the filing details. Ultimately, you must correct the problem and resubmit the filing.

File attachments (not to be confused with hyperlinks) are actually files embedded within the PDF file using the **Document** > **Attach a File** menu option within Adobe Acrobat. If you need to combine a number of separate PDF appendices into one document, you should create a single PDF document without any file attachments by choosing the **Document** > **Insert Pages** menu option instead.

3 Fees

Topics Covered in this Chapter

♦ Is there a fee to use File & Serve?
♦ What is the convenience fee?
♦ What payment options are accepted by the courts?
♦ Is it necessary to have a firm credit card?
♦ Will there be a receipt for the fees paid?
♦ What information is on a file date-stamped confirmation receipt?

Is there a fee to use File & Serve?

Yes, there are fees to use File & Serve. The fees vary based on the type of e-filing transaction, as follows:

Type of Filing	Fee
EFO (e-file only)	$7.00
EFS (e-filing with service)	$7.00
SO (service only)	$7.00

When a filer uses File & Serve, the filer is required to select the proper fees related to the documents being filed.

What is the convenience fee?

A convenience fee is assessed to cover the credit card processing fees and may vary by court.

What payment options are accepted by the courts?

The court currently accepts MasterCard®, Visa®, and Discover® debit and credit cards.

Is it necessary to have a firm credit card?

The firm has the option to use a credit card to pay for e-filing and statutory fees, but a credit card is not required.

You can set up a waiver account to pay e-filing and statutory fees if you do not have a credit card, but some type of payment account is required to use File & Serve.

Standard credit card service fees apply.

Will there be a receipt for the fees paid?

Yes, the **Envelope Details** screen can be printed for use as a receipt. On the **Filings** tab, click

 to view the filing details. The **Envelope Detail** screen includes several lines devoted to communication from the bank, including a total amount and the status of the financial transaction.

What information is on a file date-stamped confirmation receipt?

The File & Serve system confirmation receipt issued by the system contains the following information:

- Case name and number
- Date and time of filing
- Document title
- Document code
- Name of the EFS service provider
- Name of the person or entity filing the document
- Page count of the filed document

4 Format Errors

Topics Covered in this Chapter

This section describes the format errors received when using File & Serve.

Format Errors Defined

I am receiving "Format Errors" messages. What does this mean?

When a filing is not successfully processed and identified as having a "Format Error," this indicates that the filing has one or more document files that are not valid for filing document conversion. The underlying cause of the issue is typically either that the document was not successfully uploaded or that the document has a characteristic that prevents the standard processing of the file.

As a start, errors of this type will be minimized if they comply with a standard format that includes the following:

- Use 8.5-by-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.

Causes of Typical Format Errors

Format errors are typically caused by the following submissions:

- Corrupt files (i.e., files with 0 bytes of data)

- Secured or password-protected PDFs

- File types other than PDF

- Files with non-standard image compression (standard is CCIT; this is usually a scanner setting).

- A document that has Optical Character Recognition (OCR) associated with it; usually determined by a larger file size.

- Any file that experienced an upload issue or time-out on the file transfer on behalf of the filing party; usually appearing as an incomplete image or file when opened.

- A document scan that is in landscape orientation, is noticeably off-center, or is an irregular size.

- Any scan (PDF format) that is unreadable or has large black images in the document where pictures may have been.

• A file that contains an invalid table, which is usually a result of importing or pasting table data into a word processing application.

Actions to Identify the Format Error Issue

There are several ways to identify format issues within filed documents. This section can help identify documents with formatting issues.

Checking the Filing Queue

The first action is check the filing queue and determine whether the document uploaded successfully.

To check the filing queue, perform the following steps:

1. Open the document files by using the **Filing Queue** link on the left menu.

2. Click under the **Details** column for your case.

3. Scroll down to the **Documents** section of the **Filing Details** page to locate the uploaded document.

4. Click the document link under the **File Name** column to open the document.

   ⓘ **Note: If the file does not open using the original authoring tool, cancel this filing and create a new filing.**

   Prior to uploading documents for new filings, confirm that the document files will open successfully from their original source.

Corrupted Files

Corrupted files, such as files with zero (0) bytes of data, are one of the many reasons a filing has format errors, as shown in the following example:
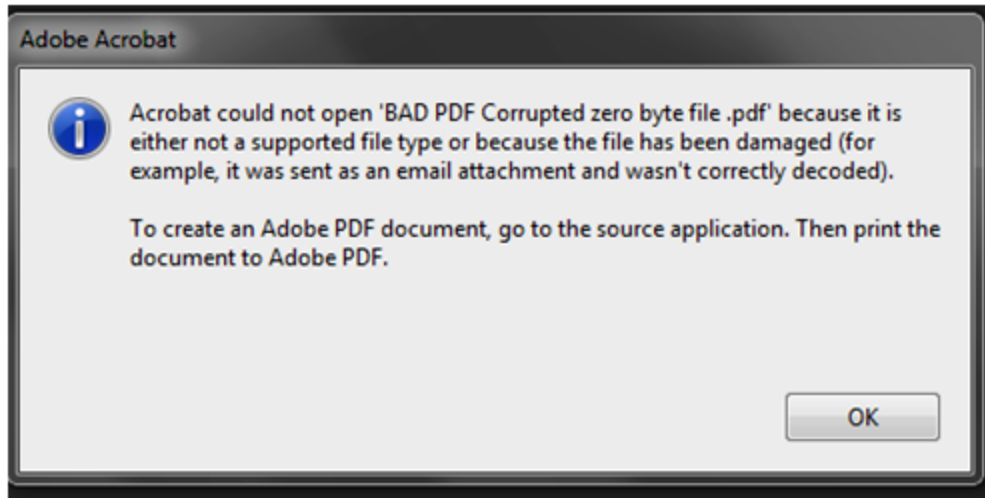

Figure 4.7 – BAD PDF Corrupted File Error Message

Document Security

PDF files have security settings that can prevent documents from being e-filed. A file with document security has a padlock icon on the document and may have "SECURED" shown in the file name.
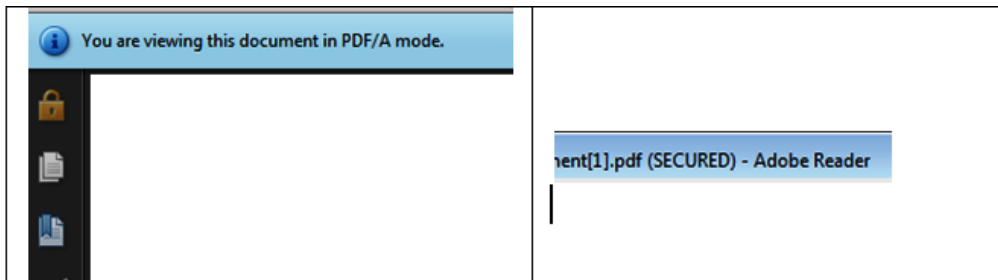

Figure 4.8 – Document Security Message

The document security can include a number of different options, any of which will prevent the document file from being processed. To ensure successful document processing, recreate the PDF file with no security options.
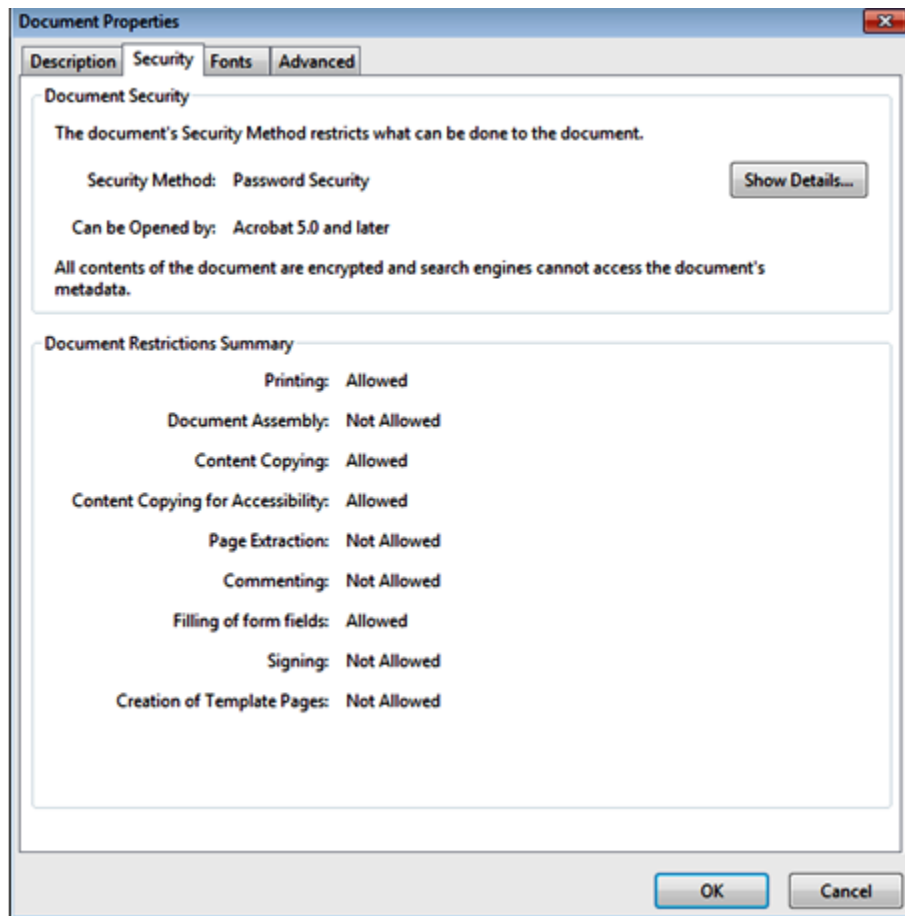
Figure 4.9 – Document Properties Security Tab

Unsupported Fonts

Font resources are included in newly created documents. This is a standard with PDF/A files. Document generating tools use non–supported fonts when creating documents, which results in the inability to convert the document into the standard e-filing format.

There are multiple ways to examine the fonts embedded in the file. PDF viewers can show the fonts, or the file editors can enable you to view the fonts used.

The JBig font is not a supported font.

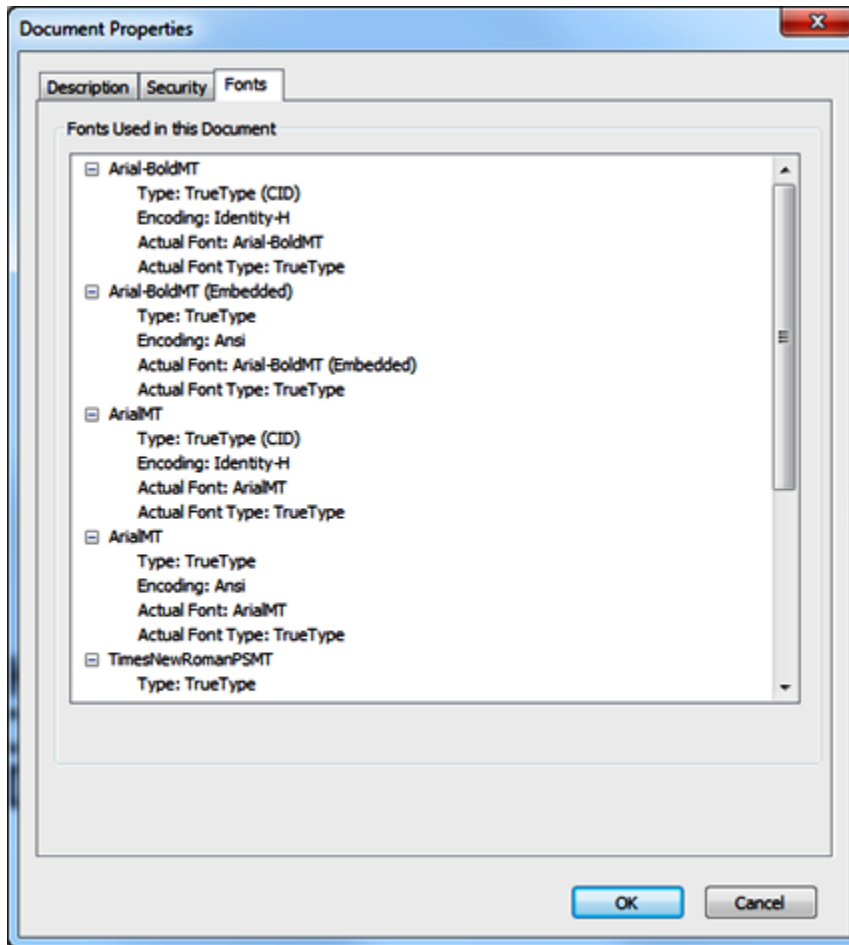The following is an example of a PDF viewer identifying the fonts used by a PDF file.

Figure 4.10 – Document Properties Fonts Tab

5 E-serving

Topics Covered in this Chapter

♦ How do I serve other individuals with my e-filed documents?
♦ Can I use e-service without filing a document with the court?
♦ Does File & Serve send a service notification after a filing is submitted?
♦ When is a service notification sent?
♦ What should I do if I receive a service notification?
♦ What is the Master Service List used for in e-filing?

How do I serve other individuals with my e-filed documents?

The filers are responsible for accomplishing service of all filings as required by the applicable court rules. For this purpose, filers may use the mail service, serve by hand delivery, send an e-mail, or use File & Serve, which offers the option of electronic service of each filing to the designated service contact.

Can I use e-service without filing a document with the court?

Yes, File & Serve may be used to exchange documents between parties without filing the documents through the courts.

Select the **Service** check box on the **Filings** screen, and ensure that the **E-File** check box is not selected.
ⓘ **Note: Transaction and service fees will apply.**

Does File & Serve send a service notification after a filing is submitted?

Yes, File & Serve automatically generates service notifications for filing transactions after the filing is submitted – if you have selected this option using the **Manage (E-mail) Notification** tab on the **My Account** screen.
ⓘ **Note: Check your spam or junk folder if you have not received a notification from File & Serve.**

When is a service notification sent?

Service notifications are generated after the submission a service-only filing.

For E-File & Serve (EFS) filings, a notification is sent only after the court has accepted the filing.
ⓘ **Note: Check your spam or junk folder if you have not received a service notification regarding your filing.**

What should I do if I receive a service notification?

When you receive a service notification, perform the following steps:

1. Click the link within the e-mail to access the file.

2. Print a copy of the documents for your files right away, as the link is available for a limited time only.

What is the Master Service List used for in e-filing?

The Master Service List is a list of all contacts attached to the Case Service list from all firms.

The information in the Master Service List is used to send electronic service. The Master Service List is updated as contacts are attached to the case list.

6 What is e-service?

Topics Covered in this Chapter

♦ Does opposing counsel have to consent to be e-served?
♦ What is the Firm Service Contacts list?
♦ What is the Case Service Contacts list?

E-service is a feature provided by File & Serve 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.

Does opposing counsel have to consent to be e-served?

Yes, opposing counsel must consent to be e-served.

What is the Firm Service Contacts list?

Firm Service Contacts list contains all of the firm's contacts that can be attached to the case and can be e-served.

What is the Case Service Contacts list?

A Case Service Contacts list is available for every case. This list contains all the names of individuals being served on the case. Attorneys must ensure that they are on the Case Service Contacts list for each case in which they are involved.

ⓘ **Note: It is mandatory to enter your contact information in the Case Service Contacts list to ensure that you are receiving notification of any documents.**

7 Tyler Technologies Technical Support Contact Information

For assistance, contact Tyler Technologies through the following resources.

Resource	Contact Information
Odyssey File & Serve Support Hours	7 a.m. to 9 p.m. (CT), Monday through Friday
Odyssey File & Serve Support Chat	Assistance is also available online through Support Chat.
Odyssey File & Serve E-mail	efiling.support@tylertech.com
Odyssey File & Serve Telephone	800.297.5377
Go To Assist (Support)	Support may ask to assist you by sharing your screen using GoToAssist.