

## **E-Filing Information and Guide**

### **What is E-Filing?**

Electronic filing, or e-filing, is one way to file documents with the Court electronically. Here are some things to know if you want to e-file:

- You must go through an e-filing service provider (EFSP), which are listed on our court website. You cannot email your documents directly to the Court.
- E-filing is not free. You will need to pay a processing fee to the EFSP as well as the Court fees unless you are granted a fee waiver. CRC 2.253(b), 2.258(b), CCP 1010.6(d)(2).
- You will convert all documents into PDF files. Original signatures are not required.
- You must have access to the internet and a credit card to create an online account with the EFSP for e-filing and to access your filings in the Court's E-Court portal.

Starting on 9/5/23, e-filing is available for all family law, probate, and mental health cases in addition to general civil and civil appeals cases. Starting on 10/23/23, e-filing will be mandatory for all attorneys and optional for self-represented litigants.

Each document will be date-stamped the same day it is e-filed but can take up to 3 days for it to be processed. You can access your filing through the E-Court public portal.

### **Do I Have to E-File?**

No. If you are self-represented, you do not have to e-file. You have the option of filing in one of the other ways discussed below. In addition, there are some documents that cannot be e-filed, such as:

- Subpoenas and bench warrants
- Certified / sister-state judgments
- Any filing that requires parties to include a self-addressed envelopes, such as entry of default and judgments
- Any document required by law to contain an original signature or to be filed in original form.

For a complete list, please see Local Rules 3.27(d) (civil), 7.2(e)(probate), 5.12(e)(family law and adoption), and 6.3(e)(mental health).

### **What Are the Other Ways To File My Documents?**

For those documents that cannot be e-filed or for self-represented litigants, you can file them with the Court in the following ways:

1. **In-Person**. Filing hours from 8:30am-2:00pm, Monday-Friday. You may make an appointment to file at <https://www.alameda.courts.ca.gov/online-services/online-appointment-services>
2. **Drop Box\***. Filing Hours: 2:00pm-4:00pm, Monday-Friday.
3. **By Mail\***. Mail to one of the courthouses below depending on the type of case you are filing.  
\*For Drop Box or mailing, please include a check or money order for the filing fees if you do not have a fee waiver and a self-addressed stamped-envelope addressed to you.

You may file at the Hayward Hall of Justice, located at 24405 Amador Street, Hayward, CA 94544. For civil cases or restraining orders, you may also file at: Rene C. Davidson Courthouse, located at 1225 Fallon Street, Oakland, CA 94612.

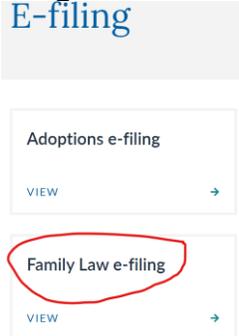
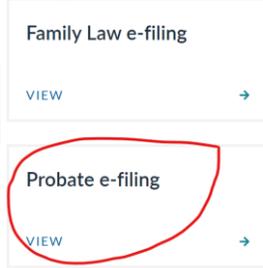
**Please note: The Self Help Center does not assist with e-filing. Please contact your EFSP if you have questions about their requirements and/or any pending filings.**

## STEPS TO E-FILE

### STEP 1

Go to <https://www.alameda.courts.ca.gov/online-services/e-filing>

### STEP 2

<p><b>For Family Law, Domestic Violence Restraining Orders, or Elder Abuse Restraining Orders, please select “Family Law e-filing.”</b></p>  <p>The screenshot shows a menu with the following items: 'Adoptions e-filing' with a 'VIEW' button and arrow, and 'Family Law e-filing' with a 'VIEW' button and arrow. The 'Family Law e-filing' item is circled in red.</p>	<p><b>For Civil Harassment Restraining Orders, Small Claims, Unlawful Detainers (Evictions), Name Change, or Gender Recognition, please select “Civil e-filing.”</b></p>  <p>The screenshot shows a menu with the following items: 'Adoptions e-filing' with a 'VIEW' button and arrow, and 'Civil e-filing' with a 'VIEW' button and arrow. The 'Civil e-filing' item is circled in red.</p>	<p><b>For Guardianship or Limited Conservatorship, please select “Probate e-filing.”</b></p>  <p>The screenshot shows a menu with the following items: 'Family Law e-filing' with a 'VIEW' button and arrow, and 'Probate e-filing' with a 'VIEW' button and arrow. The 'Probate e-filing' item is circled in red.</p>
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### STEP 3

Select an approved Electronic Filing Service Provider (“EFSP”) of your choice. For a list of certified EFSP go to the following website: <https://www.alameda.courts.ca.gov/e-filing-service-providers>

- A. All courts accepting e-filed documents are mandated to use independent EFSP’s in accordance with CRC 2.259(e).
- B. There is a cost to e-file unless you have a fee waiver or are filing the initial document and a fee waiver at the same time. The Court’s e-filing transaction fee and the EFSP’s service fee are collected by the EFSP when the filing is submitted. CRC 2.253(b), 2.258(b), CCP 1010.6(d)(2)
- C. You can obtain EFSP service fee by going to the EFSP’s website or contacting them.
- D. Most EFSP’s require that you have a credit card to use their services. This information can be found on each EFSP’s website.

### STEP 4

- A. Once you have selected an approved EFSP, you will need to create an account with the EFSP that you have selected.

**Warning:** This self-help information/instruction is not offered to take the place of legal advice. Self-Help Services does not provide legal advice nor can we act as your lawyer. You must see a lawyer for legal advice. Self-Help Services provides neutral assistance to all parties and we are not responsible for the outcome of your case.

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- B. You will need to prepare your documents for e-filing by converting all documents to PDF format. All documents must be submitted as individual PDFs. All PDFs submitted through e-filing must be searchable. The EFSP may be able to assist you in converting a non-pdf file into the proper format to be accepted for e-filing.
- C. You will need to select the correct “filing document name” for the type of filing you are submitting such as a petition, response, request for order etc. Ensuring you label your document name correctly is critical. A list of document names can be found here: <https://www.alameda.courts.ca.gov/e-filing-document-finder>

## e-filing Document Finder

The e-filing Document Finder is a list of all Document Types available to e-file through a certified E-Filing Service Provider (EFSP) by case type. The Additional Information column indicates if a document is a lead document. A lead document can be a case initiating document (e.g. complaint or petition), a moving document (e.g. motion), a responsive document (e.g. answer or response) or an ex parte document (e.g. ex parte application or stipulation and order). It is important to note which documents are lead documents because **you may only file one lead document per e-filing transaction.**

Category:   
 Document Type:   
 Document Name:

Category	Document Type	Name / Description	Additional Information
Limited Civil	Administrative	Notice of Appeal - Administrative Hearing	Lead Document
Limited Civil	Administrative	Notice of Appeal - Parking	Lead Document
Limited Civil	Administrative	Notice of Appeal - Dangerous or Vicious Dog	Lead Document
Limited Civil	ADR	Notice of Mediator Selection (CAM)	

- D. If you are filing your first document to open a case (e.g., Petition), respond to a case (e.g., Response), or an initiating document (e.g., Request for Order), then you will need to name that document the “lead document”. A list of documents that can be named “lead documents” can be found here: <https://www.alameda.courts.ca.gov/e-filing-document-finder>

Family Law	Petition	Petition for Dissolution of Marriage / Domestic Partnership (FL-100)	Lead Document
Family Law	Petition	Petition for Legal Separation of Marriage/Domestic Partnership (FL-100)	Lead Document
Family Law	Petition	Custody Order - Juvenile	Lead Document
Family Law	Petition	Petition Re: Disposition of Weapons (PC 18400)	Lead Document
Family Law	Petition	Petition to Establish Parental Relationship	Lead Document
Family Law	Petition	Petition for Declaration of Emancipation of Minor	Lead Document
Family Law	Petition	Uniform Support Petition (UIFSA)	Lead Document
Family Law	Petition	Joint Petition for Summary Dissolution of Marriage	Lead Document
Family Law	Petition	Joint Application for the Recognition of a Tribal Court Order	Lead Document
Family Law	Petition	Petition for Grandparent Visitation	Lead Document
Family Law	Petition	Summons and Complaint Regarding Parental Obligations (Governmental)	Lead Document
Family Law	Petition	Petition for Custody and Support of Minor Children	Lead Document
Family Law	Petition	Petition for Nullity of Marriage/ Domestic Partnership (FL-100)	Lead Document
Family Law	Petition	Request of Minor to Marry or Establish a Domestic Partnership	Lead Document

**\*You may only file 1 lead document per e-filing transaction\***

### STEP 5

- A. Once your documents have been e-filed you will need to wait for your documents to be processed. Processing times will depend on the time of document filed. Processing office hours are 8:30 – 4:00 p.m. Monday – Friday excluding court holidays.
- B. Once your documents have been processed, you may access them through the E-Court public portal, which can be found here: <https://eportal.alameda.courts.ca.gov>  
To view or print your documents, you will need to create an account.