

Court Services Online - e-Filing

Frequently Asked Questions

What sites can I currently e-file to?

Effective December 1, 2008, any registered user can e-file to any of the 43 court locations in the province.

Is it complicated to e-file?

No! Once you are registered, E-filing is a simple process and can take less than 3 minutes to complete. If you would like to see the process of filing to an existing file and creating a new file, watch our two online demos found on the [CSO Home Page](#).

Do I have to be a registered user?

In order to e-file, you must have a registered account with CSO or BC Online, accept the User Agreement and have a registered card against the account. For information on how to register, click the **Register** link from the [CSO Home Page](#), under the Services menu.

In order to e-file each account must first accept the User Agreement. If you already have a CSO account, the account manager must accept the new User Agreement on behalf of the account before users in the account can access e-filing. New accounts also must accept the User Agreement in order to access e-filing on the CSO website.

How much does it cost to e-file?

The service fee to e-file a document is \$7.00 per package. A package can consist of 1 or many documents that all relate to the same court file number.

E-filing is a convenience service; you can still manually file to the court registry without service fees.

What about the statutory filing fee?

The statutory filing fee is submitted at the same time that the package is submitted. CSO is automatically programmed to pre-populate fees depending on the document type selected. It is important to note that there are instances where documents can have no fee, or multiple fees depending on what is being asked for. Users still have the ability to change the fee amounts by clicking on the [EDIT link](#) which appears above the [FEE BOX](#) in Step 5 of the e-filing process.

Once you have made any changes, you will then need to click the [SAVE link](#) which appears above the [FEE BOX](#) to save any changes made.

To determine whether a statutory fee has been processed, users can review the e-filing submission sheet for a package. The [FEE COLLECTED](#) column will indicate the amount that has been processed. If the [FEE COLLECTED](#) column is blank, this means that the statutory filing fee has not been processed.

It is important to note that statutory filing fees are not processed until the registry accepts the document.

How do I know how much the statutory filing fees are for a document?

The application will default the amount payable for statutory filing fees for a court document. You have the ability to override this amount if it is incorrect by typing directly in the amount field.

The statutory filing fees for:

- Supreme Court Civil can be found in Appendix C, Schedule 1 of the Supreme Court Civil Rules.
- Supreme Court Family can be found in Appendix C, Schedule 1 of the Supreme Court Family Rules.
- Small Claims court can be found in Schedule A of the Small Claims Rules.

Which documents can be e-filed?

E-filing is available for most Supreme Court Civil and Provincial Small Claims documents. For restrictions on which documents cannot be filed, refer to [Supreme Court Civil Rule 23-3\(5\)](#), [Supreme Court Family Rule 22-4\(5\)](#) and [Small Claims Rule 22](#).

Can I submit a rush document or order?

Users can now submit a request for processing of documents/orders on an urgent/rush basis in exceptional circumstances. For further details, please refer to the [Guide for Rush Submissions](#).

What are the document standards for e-filing?

Documents submitted by e-filing must be in PDF format and no bigger than 8MB. Reader enabled and XML tagged electronic forms are available free of charge online at <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/courthouse-services>.

Can I submit scanned documents?

Yes, however all e-filed PDF documents meet the following criteria:

- **The DPI (resolution) on your printer/ scanner must be 300DPI or lower**
- **The document must be portrait, not landscape**
- **The document must be less than 8MB**
- **Must not be a colour document**

Factors effecting the Scanner conversion

- Resolution
- Bit Depth
- Colour

Resolution?

Most scanners use a grid-like array of light sensors to convert a digital image into 1s and 0s. The number of the CDD sensors in the array and the quality of the optics determines the optical resolution of a particular scanning device.

Optical resolution of a scanner is normally expressed in “dots per inch” (DPI). The optical resolution of any scanning device should exceed the maximum resolution needed to accurately capture the finest detail of the materials to be scanned.

For standard text documents, 200 DPI should be adequate and will capture most fonts to minimum of 7 point while keeping file size to a minimum¹. Anything below 7 point font should be captured at 300 DPI or higher.

Scanning a document with OCR (Optical Character Resolution) is **not** required or recommended.

More information on PDF's

PDFs:

Adobe's PDF or Portable Document Format is a native file format of the “Acrobat” family of products. PDF provides a number of additional layers beyond the digital encoding of the image. Textual searching capabilities and platform independence are inherent in the PDF file structure which is loosely based on the Post Script language used to describing text and graphical page content. PDF is an excellent output format for scanned documents containing textual content as file sizes are kept low through the use of JPEG compression.

PDF Conversion Routes:

There are many methods in which files (both TIFF image files and word processor based file) may be converted to PDF. These include, but are not limited to:

- PDF Maker
- Adobe PDF virtual printer driver

- Adobe Distiller
- PDFs created from scanned document (Both searchable and non-searchable).

How do I get the filed copy of the document back?

Once you e-file your document, you can retrieve your electronic filed copy of the document via your CSO account through the e-File View Packages link or using the Recent Packages summary located at the bottom of the screen.

What is the e-filing status?

Through e-filing status, you can review your filing status at any time for each of the documents you submitted by e-filing.

A status will show against your document filing. Use the filter buttons (Submitted, Filed, Corrections, etc.) to search by current filing status. For example, click on the Filed button to show all your documents that have been filed with the registry. Documents will be available in *Filing Status* for a period of **30 days** after reaching a final state. Final states include: *Filed, Withdrawn, Rejected* Documents with a status of *Submitted* or *Courtesy Correction* will be available until one of the final states above is reached. Documents with a status of *Referred* are currently pending.

What is a courtesy correction?

When checking a document, the registry may find errors or omissions that do not justify rejection, but that nevertheless need to be corrected. When this happens with documents filed in person at the registry, the clerk returns the documents to the client for correction; but for electronically-filed documents, the registry may use the "courtesy correction" functionality.

To avoid the risk of the client missing a filing deadline, the courtesy correction functionality provides a two-day grace period in which they may submit a corrected document but still retain the original filing date. Clients should take the following steps when responding to a courtesy correction:

1. The registry completes a Registry Notice, choosing "Courtesy Correction" as the reason and outlining specific recommendations for corrections. In the e-filing component, the client is able to view the Registry Notice and the comments entered by the registry. The Registry Notice contains a detailed explanation of courtesy corrections and advises the client that if they submit a corrected document within two business days, the original submission date and time will be applied to the corrected document. The client will also be charged another \$7.00 transaction fee for submitting the corrected document.

The Registry Notice also advises the client that if they do not wish to have the document automatically accepted after two business days, they must withdraw the document.

The Registry Notice is viewable to client when viewing a package by clicking the Registry Notice button. This button will only display when a registry notice exists against the package.

2. When the client receives a courtesy correction, they can take one of the following actions:
 - **Submit a corrected document within the two-day time period.** In this case, the date of submission of the original document is automatically applied to the new document.
 - **Take no action (that is, do not submit a corrected version or withdraw the document within the two-day time period).** The result is that the registry will accept the original document for filing after expiry of the two days.
 - **Withdraw the original document.** The client uses the withdrawal function to withdraw the document in the e-filing component, and the filing package is removed from the e-registry's list of submitted filing packages.
 - **Request that the registry accept the original document.** The registry accepts the original document by stamping or sealing it with the original date of submission.
3. If the client makes corrections to the document after the two-day deadline, they must submit the document as an amended document, which will be subject to the applicable filing fees.

Common Reasons for Courtesy Correction:

- File number or Style of Cause incorrect
- Document(s) missing from package for processing
- Minor omissions in the document
- Spelling error, typo or minor error in the document
- DPI, resolution or technical issue with the document

When would a document be rejected?

There are three situations in which an electronic document may be rejected:

1. **Non-payment of statutory fees.** If an electronically-submitted document is subject to fees but the registry is unable to process the payment, the document must be rejected. This could occur if the client does not authorize a sufficient fee for the document submitted, or if the wrong statutory filing fee is attached to the package.
2. **Submission of an exempt document.** Registries must reject all electronic documents that are:
 - Specifically exempted from electronic filing under rule 23-3 (5) of the *Supreme Court Rules*; or

- Out-of-scope for the e-filing project at this time (such as Provincial Family Court or Court of Appeal documents).
Clients must file these documents in person at a registry.

3. **Judicial decision.** Judicial decisions to reject electronic documents are made by adjudicators such as Judges, Masters or Registrars. In some cases, the adjudicator may refer the rejected document to the e-registry; it is then the responsibility of the registry to notify the client of the rejection, along with any reasons for rejection as provided by the adjudicator.

Once a package is rejected, it disappears from the registry in-basket and if the client chooses to resubmit the package, they must ensure that they resubmit all the required documents including those from the previously rejected package.

Note: *To reject an electronic document, the registry must complete a Registry Notice to explain the reason(s) for rejection to the client, and apply a "Rejected" status to the document. Please note the \$7.00 transaction fee will not be refunded if a document or filing package is rejected.*

Are there targeted turnaround times for e-filed documents?

E-filed documents should be given the same priority as clients at the counter. The following turnaround times are targeted wherever possible:

- Within 2 business hours if no signature required, and when received by 3:00pm, processed the same business day.
- Within 4 business hours if signature required with the following exceptions:
 - Chambers Order - check & signature - 5 days
 - Desk Orders - some may be done by Registry other must go to Judge or Master - Order checked in 5 days- signature vary
 - Divorce Application - check docs and sign registrar's cert - 5 days - then refer to Judge for signature.
 - Application for Registrar's Order Small Claims - 2 days
 - Garnishing order - received by 4 pm - same day
 - Writ of seizure and sale - received by 4 pm - same day
 - Summons to payment/default hearing - received by 4 pm - same day

Note, these are the targeted times and may not always be achievable given resource constraints or court activity in the processing location.

Why does the system not accept the court file number?

If the system does not accept the court file number you are entering click the SEARCH button to the left of the file number field. This function will allow you to search by file number to find the correct location, level and class for your e-filing. Once you locate your file, click the hyperlink on the file number, this then repopulates the fields in the file identification screens for you.

If the file number does not display you will have to contact the Support group as the file may fall under one of the following exceptions:

- 1) The file number has a dash (e.g. 06-1234)
- 2) The file does not exist electronically (for most locations this is per 1989 files for the Victoria Law Courts it is pre 2002)
- 3) The file number has a "0" that is not used (New Westminster Family Law Proceeding and Divorce files)

How do I sign the document electronically?

Supreme Court Civil Rule 23-3 (12) and Supreme Court Family Rule 22-4(12) deal with **Electronic authentication deemed a signature.**

Questions?

If you have questions or would like further information on e-filing, please contact [CSO Support](#).