Clerk of Court of Common Pleas Court, Guernsey County, Ohio

General Division and Domestic Relations Division

ELECTRONIC CASE FILING SYSTEM (eFile)

User Guide and Instructions

Introduction

The records of the General Division and Domestic Relations Division are held by the Guernsey County Clerk of Courts.

Registration is REQUIRED for Attorneys and Pro-Se Parties in order to utilize the **Guernsey County Electronic Case Filing System**. (see separate instructions)

Access the eFiling Portal

1 Navigate to the Guernsey County Common Pleas Court Electronic Filing Portal at: https://clerkofcourts.guernseycounty.org/eservices/home.page.2 .

2 Click the **eFile** tab or the **Log On** link (far right of screen).

3 A Login window will appear. Enter your Username (your email address) and secure Password, then click **Login**. If you fail to log in after five (5) attempts, the account will remain locked for ten (10) minutes, after which you will be able to try again.

4 If you forget your secure password, click the **Forgot Password?** Link in the Login window. You will receive an email with a temporary password to log in. A new screen will open; reenter the temporary password in the Current Password field, then enter your new password in the New Password field and again in the Confirm New Password field. Click Change Password.

eFiling Portal Tabs Guide

1. **Attorney Name Tab (Your Name):** Your personal information and account settings.
   - **NOTE**: any changes made in this field (i.e., your address or phone number) must be filed as a Notice with the Clerk of Courts separately to update the Case Management System.
   - You can **Manage Email Notifications**, since you will receive emails about any e-filing status *unless* you opt out by checking the Opt Out box leading each status.
   - You can add **Email Addresses** that you want to receive the same notifications as your primary email account, such as your authorized staff members.

   - If you unselect **Notify** upon the eUser's email addresses, the eUser will *only* receive Notices of Electronic Filing (eService) to their email address and their eFiling Messages Inbox.
   - Click the **Save Configuration** button at the bottom of the screen.
2. **Home Tab**: eFiling Portal home page; the left pane provides links to information you may find helpful.
3. **Search Tab**: Facilitates searches of the online public records.

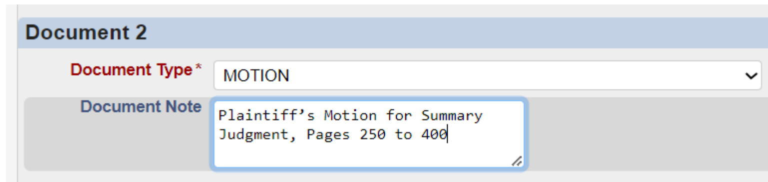
4. **eFile Tab:** Opens the **My Filings** queue. From this tab, you can do the following:
   - Initiate a new matter with *Create a New Case Request*.
   - File in a matter already assigned a case number, whether the status of the matter is open or closed (post-judgment), with *Create a Subsequent Filing*.
   - Save drafts to complete and submit later.
   - Monitor the status of submissions.
   - Correct rejected submissions.
   - Search for your specific filings.
5. **Orders Tab:** Opens the **Proposed Orders** queue to check the status of any Proposed Order you have submitted.
6. **Cases Tab:** Contains a list of all the cases you have marked in any Case Details window. To mark cases, utilize the **Search** tab, conduct a search and mark the star icon next to the eFile link. If you have already eFiled in a particular case, navigate to your **eFile** tab and select the Filing Status of "eFiling Complete." At the bottom of the screen, all your cases should appear. Click on a case; a new window will open. Select the live link of the case number; a Case Details window will open. To mark the case, click the star icon next to the eFile link.

Electronic Case Filing Messages. All notifications sent to your email address from the e-filing Portal are also sent to your inbox within the portal. Click on the mail icon (right of the screen) to access those messages.

Prepare Documents for eFiling

1. Complete your pleadings, documents and/or proposed orders. The Clerk's electronic file stamp shall occupy the top right corner of page 1 in an area 3 inches wide and 1.5 inches high. This area shall be kept free from any text/pictures on any documents submitted for eFiling. Ensure your **document formatting** (i.e., margins and headings, etc.) complies with the appropriate Local Rules of Court.
2. Where necessary, apply either **original signatures or e-signatures**, i.e., "/s/ J.B. Smith, Esq." If a document requires an original notarized signature, it must be scanned and uploaded.
3. **Submissions to be e-filed** shall be uploaded in PDF (.pdf) format. If you scan a document to save it as a PDF, limit the resolution to 300 dpi. If you utilize a court or agency-issued fillable PDF, you must save the document using a "Print to PDF" function to preserve your information.
4. **Proposed Orders** can be submitted in a Microsoft Word (doc or .docx) format, or a PDF (.pdf). If you utilize a court or agency-issued fillable PDF, you must save the document using a "Print to PDF" function to preserve your information.

5. The **maximum digital file size of any one (1) document shall not exceed 30MB (30,000KB)**. If you upload a submission that exceeds the maximum file size, a message will display: “File is too large to attach.” If necessary, save the document in multiple sections (i.e., “Plaintiff’s Motion for Summary Judgment, Pages 1 to 249”; “Plaintiff’s Motion for Summary Judgment, Pages 250 to 400”, etc.) and upload each portion as a separate document.
6. The **total digital size of a single submission session** (therefore, all documents together) cannot exceed 30MB.



Create a New Case

Create New Case Request initiates a <u>new case that does not exist in the Court’s record</u>, and therefore <u>does not have a case number</u> previously assigned by the Court.

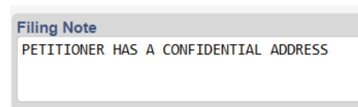
1. Log in to the [eFiling Portal]() and select the **eFile** tab.
2. At the top of the **My Filings** screen, click **Create New Case Request**.
   A New Case Request screen will open.
3. Enter your **Ohio Attorney Registration Number**. The system recognizes that the filer is the attorney who is logged in, so entering information in this field is optional.
4. If desired, enter **Reference Tags** to associate the matter with your internal case, client, or account number or other information.
5. Select the **Case Type*** from the drop-down list of case types that can be initiated via eFiling.
   Note: Not all case types can be initiated via eFiling.
6. Select the **Initiating Action*** from the drop-down list of actions, which populates based upon the Case Type selected. The required deposit for court costs (if any) or fees will populate automatically in the Initiating Action field.

Party Information

When you ***Create a New Case Request***, you must add each party’s information in the **Party** section.

1. Select the **Party Type*** using the drop-down list.
2. If appropriate, select the **Role Type** using the drop-down list.
3. Click **Rep by Atty** if that party is represented by the attorney eUser who is filing.
4. Enter *either* the **Last Name*** and **First Name*** of the party <u>OR</u> the party’s **Company*** name (not both).

5. Enter the **Address Type**; choose **DEFAULT ADDRESS** from the **Address Type** drop-down list. If you enter the Zip code without the four-digit extension, the City and State will auto populate.
6. Enter the **Phone Number**; choose **DEFAULT PHONE** from the **Phone Type** drop-down list.
7. **Email Address**; if available
8. To add additional addresses or contact information for this party, click **Add Contact Information**.
9. If filing for a party with a **confidential address**, please include specific notes under the **Filing Note** section and submit a ***Notice to the Clerk of Confidential Disclosure***.



10. If the party has an alias, click **Add Affiliation/Alias** and enter the affiliation type and either the alias First and Last Names *or* the alias Company name.

11. Fields for Party 1 and Party 2 are visible. If there are more than two parties, click **Add Party** (the last button in the Parties field, just above the Documents field).
12. Repeat these steps until all parties are added. Scroll to the bottom and click **Save**. The system will indicate if any required information is missing.
13. To change a party's contact information later, such as to update a party's address, the eUser must submit a Notice to the Court. Once the notice is eFiled, the Clerk's office will make the appropriate changes in the case management system.

Subsequent Filings (in an Open Case, or to Reopen a Closed Case)

To Create a **Subsequent Filing** within a case that already exists in the Court's Record and therefore was previously assigned a case number. Use Create Subsequent Filing to file within a case that is currently open, or if the filer seeks to reopen a closed case (i.e., to file a motion to modify the court's prior orders; to file a motion to show cause).

Click the **eFile** tab.

1. First, enter the case number in the **Case Number** field.
2. Then, click **Create Subsequent Filing.**

If you do not know the Case Number, utilize the **Search** tab.

Filing in Multiple Cases

Open (Pending) Cases

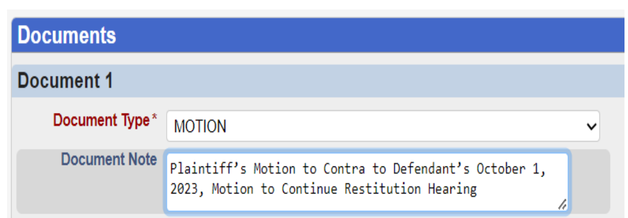
If multiple cases are associated, and you intend to file the same document(s) in each of those cases, upload an *exact copy* of the submission in **EACH** case (see **Subsequent Filing** section). Ensure all case numbers appear in the caption of each document(s). If you intend to file a proposed order in multiple linked cases, file an *exact copy* of that proposed order in **EACH** case. Ensure all case numbers appear in the caption of the proposed order.

Reopen (Closed) Cases

When reopening multiple closed cases, upload your submission in **EACH** closed case number. Ensure all case numbers appear in the caption of each document(s) filed.

Submit Documents

1. In the **Documents** window, select the **Document Type*** from the drop-down list.
2. In the **Document Note** field, enter the <u>EXACT TITLE</u> of your document. For example, though you may have chosen "Motion" from the **Document Type*** drop-down list, type the <u>exact title</u> of your pleading in the **Document Note** field (i.e., *Plaintiff's Motion to Strike Defendant's October 1, 2022 Motion to Continue Restitution Hearing*).



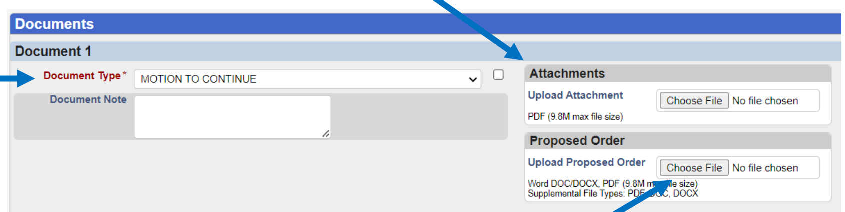
   a. If the document is part of a large, multi-part upload, the **Document Note** should indicate that information (i.e., *Exhibit A to Defendant's Motion to Suppress, Part 2 of 2*).
   b. **NOTE: Information typed in the Document Note field will be included on the Court's docket and viewable to the public (following Clerk Review).**
3. In the **Attachments** field, click **Choose File**, then navigate within your local device to the .pdf document you intend to submit. Select the document, then click **Open**. The document will upload.

   If a court cost or fee is associated with that document, that cost will be reflected as a **Filing Fee**. If the cost or fee is to be deducted from the deposit, the cost will not be added to the total due to file. If the cost or fee must be paid, it will be added to the total amount due at the bottom of the window.
4. Within each Document field (i.e., "Document 1"), a maximum of five (5) attachments can be uploaded (exclusive of a proposed order).
5. To add more documents, click the **Add Document** button and repeat the process above.
6. To remove a document after it was attached, click **Delete**.

7. The **Filing Note** field (bottom of the screen) allows the filer to give the Clerk Reviewer additional information regarding the filing. This information will be seen by the Reviewer and will be visible in your My Filings queue but is not stored in the Court Electronic Record.
8. Click **Save**. Your entire session is now in Draft Status.

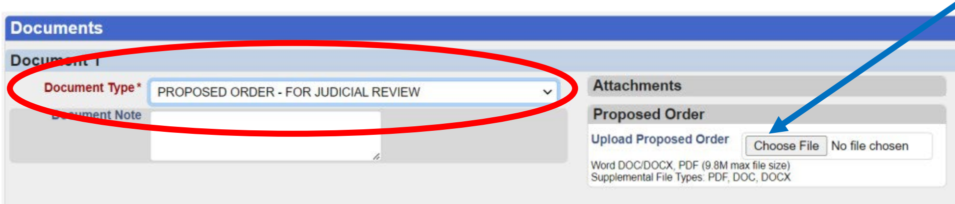
Proposed Orders

When you submit certain pleadings, such as a motion to continue, the eFiling Portal expects you will submit a proposed order that sustains your motion for the Court's consideration. The applicable Local Rules may require that you submit a proposed order. You would add the Motion as your **Document Type** and upload the Motion under the **Attachments**.



Then you would upload the **Proposed Order** as follows.

1. In the **Proposed Order** field, click **Choose File**, then navigate to your proposed order or entry. Select the order, then click **Open**. The order will upload.
2. **Proposed Order Prepared by Filer**. Proposed Orders drafted by the filer shall be submitted in a Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) format.
3. **Standard Forms**. Proposed Orders contained within a fillable PDF form can be submitted for eFiling. Save the document using a "print a PDF" function to preserve your information and to close the fillable fields.
4. To submit a **Proposed Order** ONLY without a pleading (ex. Motion) for the Court's consideration, choose the **Document Type:** PROPOSED ORDER – FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW then upload the Proposed Order in the **Proposed Order** field.



The Clerk will print the Proposed Order and send to the Court. If the order is signed, it will be processed by the Clerk and mailed to all parties cc'd on the Order. NOTE: The filer MUST include cc's on the Order for the clerk to provide copies.

Final Processing

1. If you click **Cancel**, the session will clear. You will return to the Filing Queue. Information entered on your screen will **NOT** be saved if you select this option.
2. If you click **Save**, the entire filing session will be saved as a <u>DRAFT</u> and <u>NOT SUBMITTED</u>; therefore, you can continue to modify your filing.
3. If you click **Continue with Filing**, a screen that summarizes the documents prepared for submission will appear, including the costs due.

4. Click **Modify** to make any necessary corrections or to upload more documents.
5. Click **Submit Filing** to proceed with the payment and upload your submission.

ePayment

1. Create your filing and select who the filing is on behalf of.
2. Click **Continue with Filing**.
3. Review and verify the information.
4. Click **Add to Cart** to place the filing in the shopping cart (top right corner of screen).
   - To submit more filings for additional cases, repeat steps and add them individually to the cart.
   - Each filing will be listed separately, showing the total fees owed.
   - To start a new case or upload other documents, click **Return to My Filings**.
   - To remove a filing and submit later:
     - ➢ Check the box next to the filing fee.
     - ➢ Click **Remove from Cart.**
     - ➢ The filing will be saved to your Draft Folder for future submission.
5. When ready to submit everything, click **Submit Filings and Pay Now**.
6. You'll be redirected to the LexisNexis Vital Check secure payment portal.
7. On the payment site:
   - Confirm your total (includes all submitted filings)
   - Enter billing and payment information.
   - Complete the reCAPTCHA.
   - Click **Continue.**

8. On the payment verification page:
    - Review payment info
    - Service fees from LexisNexis will be added
9. Select **Pay Now** to finish and return to the Guernsey County Electronic Filing Portal.
10. Your payment will show as pending until the Clerk accepts your submission(s).
11. Once accepted, the payment is finalized, and you will receive a receipt email from LexisNexis Vital Check.

Clerk Review

After your submission is received, the Clerk's office will review it. You can track the status under the **eFile** tab and the **My Filings** queue.

1. If the submission is **Clerk Accepted**, it will be eFiled as of the date and time the filing is *accepted*.
    a. The filer is responsible for serving their filings in accordance with the applicable Rules of Procedure upon all parties who are not registered eUser's.
2. If the submission is **Rejected**, the eUser will receive a message from the eFiling Portal sent to the eUser's notification email address AND the eUser's eFiling Portal Inbox.
    a. Log in and select the **eFile** tab. Within **My Filings**, the **Filing Status** of a submission not accepted for e-Filing will be marked **Rejected** (displayed in red text).
    b. Select the filing to open the record. All fields flagged by the Reviewer (Clerk) are identified by yellow highlighting. A **Reviewer Comments** field appears after each section; the Reviewer (Clerk) may provide additional, specific information, or specific instructions for the filer.
    c. Address the necessary concerns to correct your submission.
    d. Click **Submit Filing**. The submission will be reviewed by the clerk, and the filing status of the submission will change from **Clerk Rejected** to **Filing Resubmitted**.
    e. If a filing is **Resubmitted** and the **Clerk Accepted** the filing, the filing will be timestamped as the date and time the filing is *resubmitted*.

eFiling Status

Once you have opened or are associated with cases, the **My Filings** queue under the **eFile** tab will refer to your filings with a **Filing Status** description as one of the following:

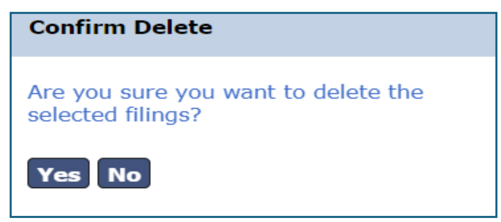
- **Draft** – you created and started a filing, but it has not been submitted to the Court. You can leave a matter in draft status for up to six (6) months, after which time the ECF will purge the record.

- **Filing Submitted** – the submission was received into the Electronic Filing System and is awaiting review by the Clerk. The filer can modify a submission while it remains in submitted status – therefore if you discover an error in your filing and wish to upload a replacement, you can delete the prior submission and replace it with a new submission.
- **Clerk Reviewing** – the submission is currently being reviewed by the Clerk.
- **Clerk Rejected** – the submission was refused for eFiling and an email notification regarding the specific issue(s) was sent to the filer and is also available in your Inbox in the eFiling Portal. See **Rejected Filings** for further information.
- **Filing Resubmitted** – after rejection, you uploaded a corrected submission for review by the Clerk.
- **Clerk Accepted** – your submission was accepted for eFiling, and the payment (if any was required) is complete.
- **Filed & Docketed** – your eFiled document has been timestamped with the date and time of *submission*, has been docketed, and filed upon the Court's record.

Delete Filings

Documents or cases in your **My Filings** queue under the **eFile** tab can be deleted if the Filing Status does not reflect Reviewing or Accepted. This selection box appears only on filings that are eligible to be deleted.

1. To delete a filing, click the box on the right margin of the record you wish to delete. Click **Delete** at the bottom of the screen.
2. A **Confirm Delete** window will appear and ask if you are sure you want to delete the selected filing.
3. If you wish to delete the filing, click **Yes**.
   You will still be able to view your accepted filings and active cases under **Cases** tab in the eFiling Portal.



Clerk's Office Contact Information

For questions or issues with eFiling, please don't hesitate to reach out to the Clerk's office.

Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Phone: 740-432-9233

Email: kswank@guernseycounty.org AND jjohnson@guernseycounty.org