



Cook County Clerk of the Circuit Court

**eFile**

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# Electronic Filing

## Frequently Asked Questions

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### **How do I register for an eFile Account?**

To register for an eFile Account, go to the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County website at [www.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org](http://www.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org). On the homepage, click on "Start eFiling Now", which will take you to the eFiling website.

Look for the 'If you are a new user please click here to register' link. This link will take you to the eFiling "Account Type" screen. Select an 'Account Type' (either Attorney or *Pro Se*).

If you are registering as an attorney, enter your own or your law firm's valid Cook County Attorney Code. You will also need to enter the verification code depicted in the graphic. (Note: this code is case sensitive.) In the subsequent screen you will be required to provide: your name (as it appears on your Attorney Registration & Disciplinary Commission ("ARDC") card; contact information; law firm name; ARDC number; a user ID and password that you create; and a valid email address. In the "CC:" section, you may enter up to five email addresses for individuals you designate to receive copies of all your electronically filed documents/pleadings.

If you are registering as a self-represented litigant (*Pro Se*) you will enter the verification code depicted in the graphic. (Note: this code is case sensitive.) In the subsequent screen, you will enter the above-referenced information, with the exception of the Cook County Attorney Code and ARDC number.

After submission of the registration information, a confirmation email will be sent to the email address provided on the registration screen. All registrants of the eFiling System ("System") will have the option of sending and/or receiving electronic service through the System. During the registration process, you will have the option of consenting to receive service electronically.

### **What is a Cook County Attorney Code and how is it assigned?**

A Cook County Attorney Code is a unique five-digit numerical code randomly assigned to law firms and attorneys by the Clerk's Office as an identifier on all pleadings filed and orders drafted in the Circuit Court of Cook County. The Law Division is responsible for assigning and maintaining Attorney Codes for all attorneys practicing in the Circuit Court of Cook County. An Attorney Code may be obtained in Room 801 of the Richard J. Daley Center, 50 West Washington Street, Chicago, Illinois 60602. The requestor will need to complete the Cook County Attorney Code Request Form and submit copies of his/her valid government-issued driver's license or identification card and his/her current ARDC card. A request can be submitted via fax to 312 603-3348, or via email at [attorneycode@cookcountycourt.com](mailto:attorneycode@cookcountycourt.com). If you require additional information regarding this procedure, please contact 312 603-5469.

**Who can eFile?**

An attorney licensed to practice law in Illinois and is in good standing with the Illinois Supreme Court or a *Pro Se* filer can eFile if he/she successfully registers and receives an eFile account.

**Can a law firm have a firm eFile Account, or does each attorney have to have his/her own account?**

A law firm may not have a firm eFile account if there are multiple attorneys in the firm that will be eFiling. Each attorney must have his/her own eFile account and is required to register independently. This requirement exists to allow for validation of attorneys in good standing with the Illinois Supreme Court.

**I submitted a completed registration form, but have not received my email confirmation-what should I do?**

For assistance, you may access the 'Support Forum' section located on the homepage of the eFiling System.

**What hardware and software do I need to eFile?**

The eFiling System is a web-based application that needs no proprietary software or special hardware. However, you will need to have a personal computer or comparable equipment with access to the following in order to eFile:

- Internet access;
- Internet Browser application, such as Internet Explorer, Mozilla, FireFox ... etc.;
- Adobe PDF Reader (free download from Adobe);
- A scanner to submit non-electronic documents (if applicable); and
- A document program creator such as Microsoft Word or Works, Word Perfect or a PDF document creator that is Adobe compatible

**Will training be available for the new eFiling System?**

Yes, training classes will be available. Initially, classes will be conducted during the months of March and April 2009. Registration for these classes will be available through the Clerk of the Circuit Court website ([www.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org](http://www.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org)). In addition, an online video training will be made available.

**What methods of payment will be accepted for electronic filing?**

The eFiling System accepts all major credit cards, debit cards and electronic checks for payment.

**Can the general public view electronically filed cases and documents through the Internet?**

No, at this time the public will not be able to view electronically filed documents via the Internet. Only those parties that are registered within the Clerk's Office eFile System will be able to access electronically filed documents.

**What is the 'Recurring Party' feature in the 'My Account' section?**

The 'Recurring Party' feature in the 'My Account' menu allows registrants to enter plaintiff or defendant names once for future use in other cases within the eFiling System.

**How can I update my contact information?**

You can update your contact information entered during the registration process by selecting 'Update Account' from the 'My Account' menu. However, it is still the attorney's responsibility to update his/her information with the Clerk's Office if those changes relate to any information maintained in the Cook County Attorney Code database.

**I noticed a mistake in my electronic filing after the pleading was accepted by the Clerk's Office-how can I correct it?**

You can make a correction to a filing by following the same procedures as if the pleading was conventionally filed. This may require you to seek relief from the court.

**How do I add my signature to pleadings/documents that I electronically file?**

An electronic signature will be created and added to your pleadings/documents when you use your unique user ID and password.

**Can I combine a complaint and pleading in a single electronic filing?**

Complaints that are filed electronically must be filed separately. Any subsequent pleadings can be filed within the same submission as long as the filings are related to the same case.

**What is a 'Trace Number'?**

A 'Trace Number' is a unique reference number assigned by the eFiling System to each electronic filed transaction. If you need to communicate with the Clerk's Office prior to our acceptance of a particular filing, the 'Trace Number' can be used to identify the transaction.

**How does a filer receive notification that his/her filing has been accepted by the Clerk's Office?**

The filer will receive an e-mail notification of all accepted filings, with the related documents as an attachment.

**Can sealed documents/cases be filed electronically?**

No, sealed documents/cases cannot be filed electronically. They must be filed conventionally. A party can however, electronically file a motion seeking leave of court to file a document/case under seal.

**Are there fees associated with electronic filing?**

Yes, there are fees associated with electronic filing.

**Can exhibits be electronically filed with a pleading?**

Yes, exhibits can be electronically filed with a pleading as long as the size of the entire filing does not exceed 10 MB.

**Do I have to file a paper copy of my electronically filed document/pleading?**

No, you are not required to conventionally file a paper copy of your document/pleading that was electronically filed. The Clerk's Office is responsible for printing the official copy of each filing. However, the filer is required to retain the original signed copy of the document/pleading for at least one year following the completion of the appellate process, and shall make it available upon request or pursuant to order of court.

**Is the eFiling System available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week?**

Yes, individuals will be able to electronically file 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. However documents filed outside of the Clerk's Office normal business hours will be accepted as filed on the following business day.

**What are the normal business hours of operation for the Clerk's Office?**

The normal business hours of operation for the Clerk's Office are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding court holidays.

**Are there size limitations for uploaded documents?**

The size limitation for uploaded documents should not exceed 10 MB.

**How do I change my password?**

You may change your password by going to 'My Account' menu, select 'Update Accounts' and click on the 'Change Password' text link.

**What documents cannot be electronically filed?**

Those documents that cannot be filed electronically are: post-judgment collection matters; documents filed in impounded cases; sealed documents/cases; an Application to Sue or Defend as an Indigent Person; and/or cases where access to the official court file is otherwise restricted by statute and/or rule.

**What area of law will a person be able to electronically file?**

Currently the only area of law that a person will be able to electronically file is Commercial Litigation within our Law Division. However, once this pilot is complete we anticipate that you will be able to electronically file in all areas of law.

**Who will have access to documents filed electronically?**

The attorney as well as the individual registered to electronically file will have access through the eFile website to access their documents and notices.

**When will the Clerk's Office begin to accept electronic filings?**

The Clerk's Office will begin to accept electronic filings for Commercial Litigation cases within its Law Division during the month of April 2009 if all testing goes as planned.