

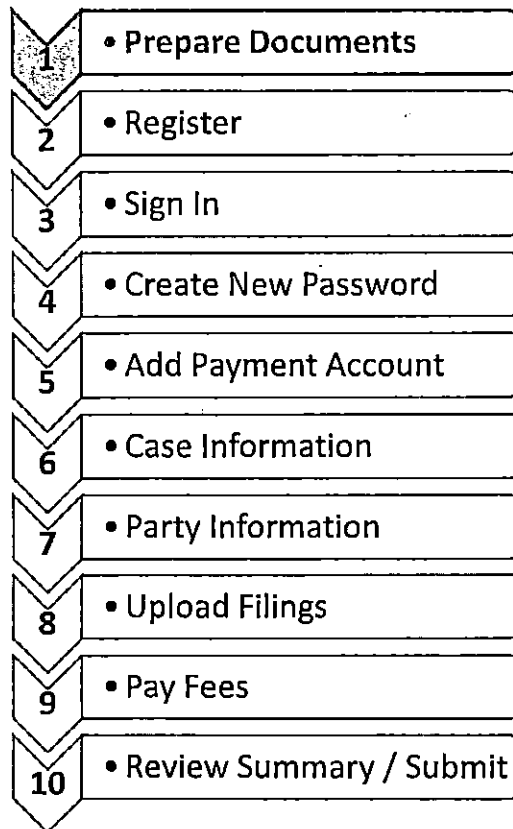


# E-Filing Guide for Self-Represented Litigants

## How to E-File in Odyssey Step 1: Prepare your Documents



### E-filing Steps



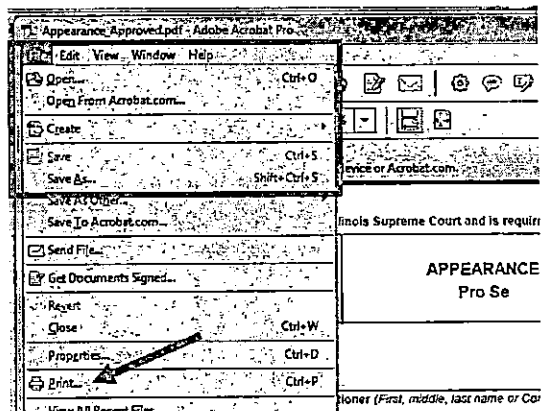


## Prepare court documents to be e-filed

To e-file your court documents, they must be saved as a text-searchable **PDF** file, whether you start from a fillable PDF, handwritten form, or Word document.

### Fillable PDF forms

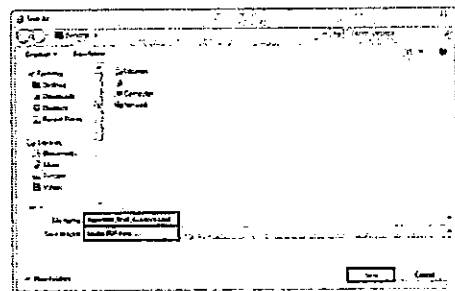
1. A Fillable PDF form is an electronic document that allows you to type in your information in the shaded boxes. To e-file this document, you want to make sure the document is no longer fillable (so no one can type anything else).
2. You can save your document while you are working on it by clicking **File** then **Save As**. This keeps the fields fillable meaning you can keep typing in the document.
3. Once you have finished working on your document, click **File** then **Print**. This does not mean you are going to print the document. This is just the way to save the document in the right format and so that no one can type anything else in the document.



If your form is a Court Form found at <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/Forms/approved/default.asp> the fillable PDF form has the "Print Form" and "Save Form" boxes at the bottom of your document and you can click **Save Form** to save your work while you are finishing your document or **Print Form** when you are ready to save it to file it.



4. When the "Print" box pops up click on the printer/destination labeled **Adobe PDF** or **Save as PDF**. Click on **Print** or **Save** or **OK**.
5. A "Save As" box will pop up. When it does, name your file. You can choose to name it anything, but it should be something that helps you and the court identify the document.
6. Make sure the "Save as type" box (under your file name) says **PDF** or **Adobe PDF**. Click **Save**.
7. Your document is now saved as a PDF on your computer.



**You may now e-file your court documents.**



## Handwritten forms



If you filled in your forms by hand, you will need to scan and save them as a PDF to a computer.

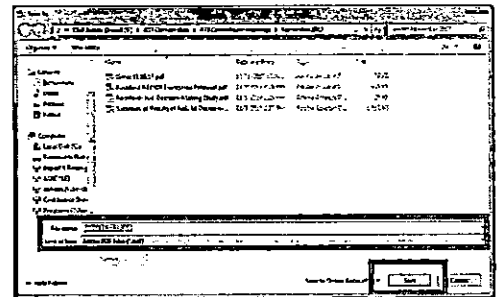
1. Take your handwritten document to a scanner. Click **Scan**.



If you do not have a scanner at home, you may be able to scan your documents at the court, your public library, or other office supply store.

2. When it is scanned, the document will either:
  - a. Appear on the computer screen and you have to save it, or
  - b. It will be sent to a folder on the computer and you will want to open it and save it with a file name that you choose.

3. With the document up on the computer, click **File** and **Save As**. A "Save As" box will pop up. When it does, name your file. You can choose to name it anything, but it should be something that helps you and the court identify the document. Make sure the "Save as type" box (under your file name) says PDF. Click **Save**.



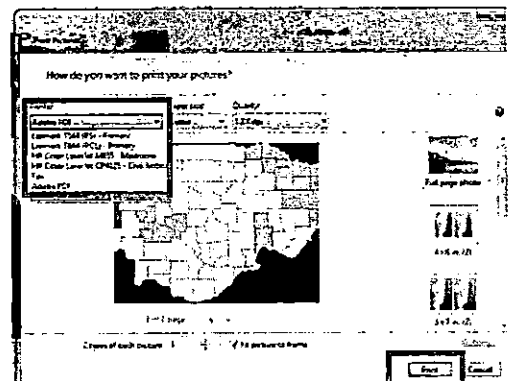
4. If your document scans in a different format like JPG or PNG, you will need to save it as a PDF.

5. To do that, select **Print**. This does not mean you are going to print the document. This is just the way that you can save the document in the right format.



6. When the "Print" box pops up click on the printer/destination labeled **Adobe PDF** or **Save as PDF**. Click on **Print** or **Save** or **OK**.

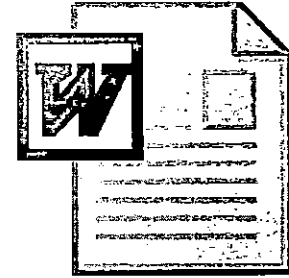
7. A "Save As" box will pop up. When it does, name your file. You can choose to name it anything, but it should be something that helps you and the court identify the document. Make sure the "Save as type" box (under your file name) says PDF. Click **Save**.



You may now e-file your court documents.



## Microsoft Word Documents

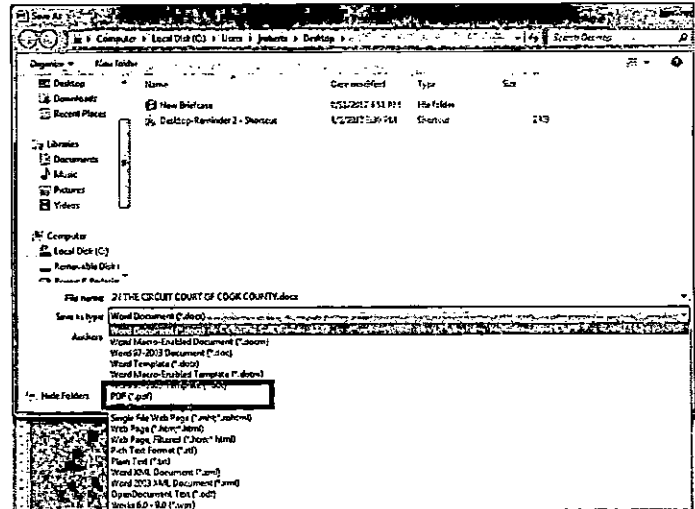


If you created your own document in Word, you will need to save it as a PDF document. There are two ways to do this.



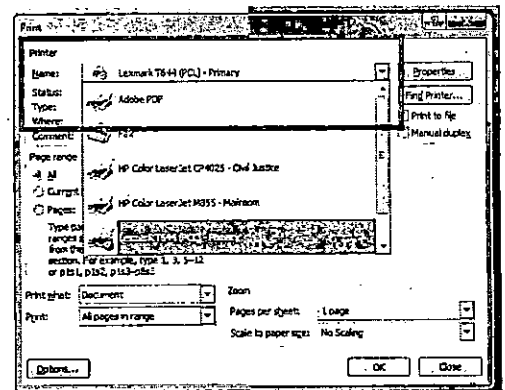
### Option 1

1. Click **File** then **Save As**.
2. A "Save As" box will pop up. When it does, name your file. You can choose to name it anything, but it should be something that helps you and the court identify the document.
3. Select the dropdown arrow for **Save as type**. Click on **PDF** or **Adobe PDF**. Click **Save**.



### Option 2

1. Click **File** then **Print**. This does not mean you are going to print the document. This is just the way that you can save the document in the right format.
2. When the "Print" box pops up click on the printer/destination labeled **Adobe PDF** or **Save as PDF**. Click on **Print** or **Save** or **OK**.
3. A "Save As" box will pop up. When it does, enter your file name. You can choose to name it anything, but it should be something that helps you and the court identify the document.
4. Make sure the "Save as type" box (under your file name) says **PDF**. Click **Save**.



You may now e-file your court documents.

Need Help? Call Odyssey's Filer Support Number: 1-800-297-5377

Page 4 of 4



# E-Filing Guide for Self-Represented Litigants

## How to E-File in Odyssey Step 2: Register to E-File



### E-filing Steps

- 1 • Prepare Documents
- 2 • Register
- 3 • Sign In
- 4 • Create New Password
- 5 • Add Payment Account
- 6 • Case Information
- 7 • Party Information
- 8 • Upload Filings
- 9 • Pay Fees
- 10 • Review Summary / Submit



## Register to e-file

Before you can electronically file (e-file) your court documents, you need to create an account.

**NOTE:** if you have created an account in any Illinois Electronic Filing Service Provider (EFSP) you do NOT need to create another new account, but you can go directly to sign in. This instruction guide only contains information for e-filing in the Odyssey EFSP.



## Go to the Odyssey website

1. Go to [efile.illinoiscourts.gov](http://efile.illinoiscourts.gov).



ODYSSEY  
eFileIL™

## E-Filing for Illinois Courts

Home

Filers

Reviewers

**Providers**

Courts

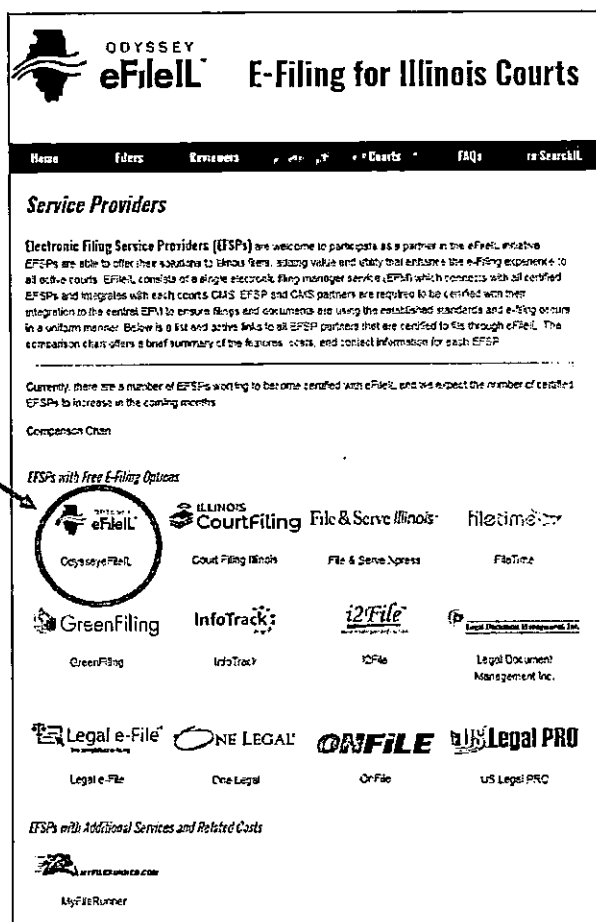
FAQs

re:SearchIL™

2. Click on **Providers** or EFSPs.

3. This page will show you all of the currently approved EFSPs.

4. Click on the **OdysseyFileIL** icon.



**Service Providers**

Electronic Filing Service Providers (EFSPs) are welcome to participate as a partner in the eFileIL initiative. EFSPs are able to offer their customers to Illinois users, adding value and utility that enhance the e-filing experience to all e-file courts. eFileIL consists of a single electronic filing manager service (EFM) which connects with all certified EFSPs and integrates with each court's CMS. EFSP and CMS partners are required to be certified with their integration to the central EFM to ensure filings and documents are using the established standards and e-filing occurs in a uniform manner. Below is a list and active links to all EFSP partners that are certified to file through eFileIL. The comparison chart offers a brief summary of the features, costs, and contact information for each EFSP.

Currently, there are a number of EFSPs working to become certified with eFileIL, and we expect the number of certified EFSPs to increase in the coming months.

Comparison Chart

**EFSPs with Free E-Filing Options**

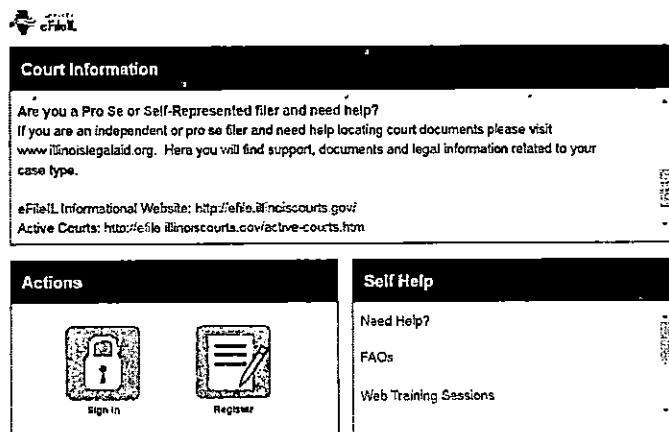
OdysseyFileIL	ILLINOIS CourtFiling	File & Serve Illinois	filetime®
OdysseyFileIL	Court Filing Illinois	File & Serve Express	FileTime
GreenFiling	InfoTrack	i2File	Legal Document Management Inc.
GreenFiling	InfoTrack	i2File	Legal Document Management Inc.
Legal e-File	ONE LEGAL	ONFILE	Legal PRO
Legal e-File	One Legal	OnFile	US Legal PRO

**EFSPs with Additional Services and Related Costs**

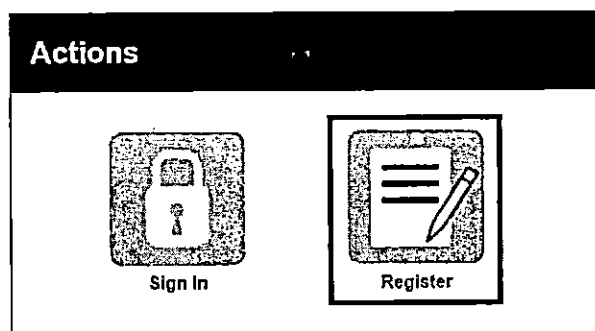
MyFileRunner

## Choose to register a new account

1. The Actions panel is where you sign into Odyssey or register as a user.



2. Click **Register**.



The **Register** button takes you to the page where you can register in the system by using your name and contact information. If you have already registered as a user for any Illinois EFSP, click **Sign In**. For detailed instructions on how to Sign In to your account see *How to E-File in Odyssey Step 3: Sign In*.



You will need:

- ✓ Email address. If you do not have an email address, you will need to create one. Commonly used email accounts include: Gmail [www.google.com/gmail](http://www.google.com/gmail), Yahoo <https://mail.yahoo.com>, and Mail.com [www.mail.com](http://www.mail.com) (Note: Mail.com does not require cell phone verification).
- ✓ Mailing address that is not a P.O. Box.
- ✓ Telephone number



## Enter email, password, and create a security question

1. Enter your **name**, an existing **email address** (that you can check regularly), and create a **password**.
  - The password can be new or a one you have used for other purposes. This password is what you will use to sign into Odyssey.
2. Make up a **security question** and **answer** that you can easily remember. For example:
  - Security Question: What is my dog's name? or What is my wedding anniversary?
  - Answer: Fido 1/1/2011



If you forget your password, you may have to correctly answer your security question to be able to access your account again. It is a good idea to write down and save your password as well as your security question and answer.

3. Then click **Next**.

The screenshot shows a 'Register' form with a progress bar at the top indicating steps: User Information, Firm Information, Terms and Conditions, and Complete. The form fields include: First Name, Middle (with a dropdown arrow), Last Name, Email Address, Password, Security Question (with a hint: 'Example: What is my dog's name?'), and Security Answer. A 'Next' button is located at the bottom right.



## Register as a self-represented litigant

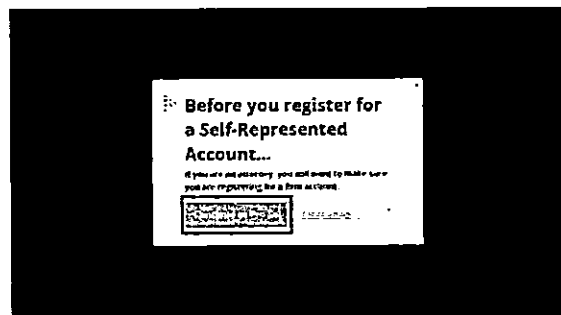
1. If you do not have an attorney, you need to register for a self-represented litigant account and not a firm account.
2. Click on the **Circle** to register as a self-represented litigant.

The screenshot shows the 'Register' form with the same progress bar. Under 'Registration Options', there are two boxes. The first box, 'Register for a Firm Account', is highlighted with a circle and lists 'Perfect for:' Attorneys, Firms with multiple filers, and Solo Attorney Practitioners. The second box, 'Register for a Self-Represented Account', is also circled and lists 'Perfect for:' Pro Se Filers, Process Servers, and Landlords / Tenants. 'Previous' and 'Next' buttons are at the bottom.



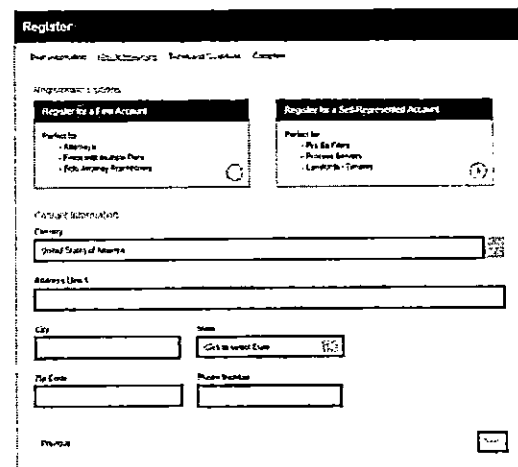
When you click on the button above, this alert will pop up.

3. Click on **Continue as Pro Se**.



## Enter your contact information

1. Select the **country** where you live. The United States of America is the default country.
2. Enter your **address** and **telephone number**.
3. Click **Next**.

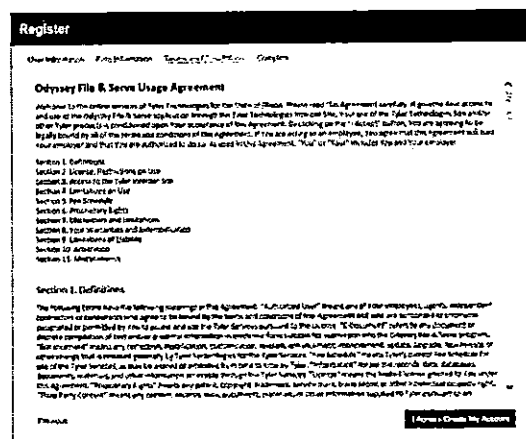



Enter an address where you can receive mail during your legal case. This cannot be a P.O. Box.



## Read the Terms and Conditions

1. Read the Terms and Conditions.
2. If you agree, click **I Agree – Create My Account**





## Confirm your account through email

After you agree to the Terms and Conditions, you will see this screen:

### Register

User Information Firm Information Terms and Conditions Complete

Congratulations, you have successfully registered!

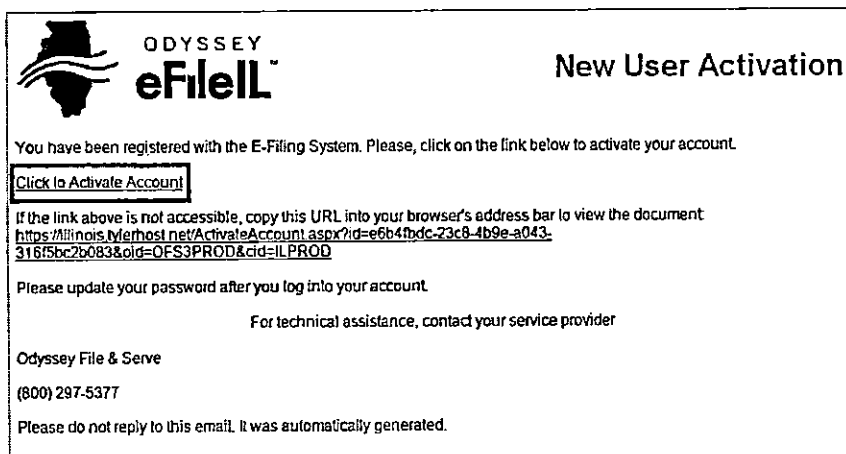
Email Address:

A verification email has been sent to you. Click on the link inside your email to complete the verification process.



You must verify your email address to complete the registration process.

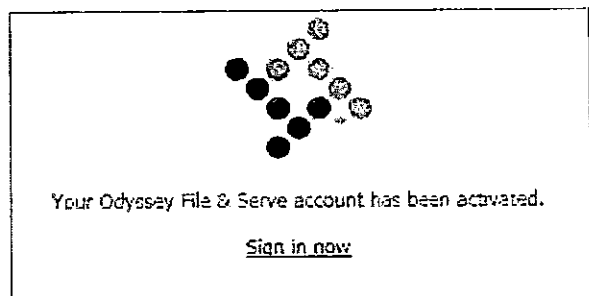
1. Login to the email account you listed during registration to see the verification email.
2. Open the email and click the link to confirm your email address. The email will look like this:



The email will be from [no-reply@tylerhost.net](mailto:no-reply@tylerhost.net). If you do not see the email in your inbox, check your junk mail or spam folder in your email account.

3. Click on **Click to Activate Account**.

A page will open with confirmation that your account has been created. It will look like this:



You have successfully registered with Odyssey.



# E-Filing Guide for Self-Represented Litigants

## How to E-File in Odyssey Step 3: Sign In



### E-filing Steps

- 1 • Prepare Documents
- 2 • Register
- 3 • Sign In
- 4 • Create New Password
- 5 • Add Payment Account
- 6 • Case Information
- 7 • Party Information
- 8 • Upload Filings
- 9 • Pay Fees
- 10 • Review Summary / Submit



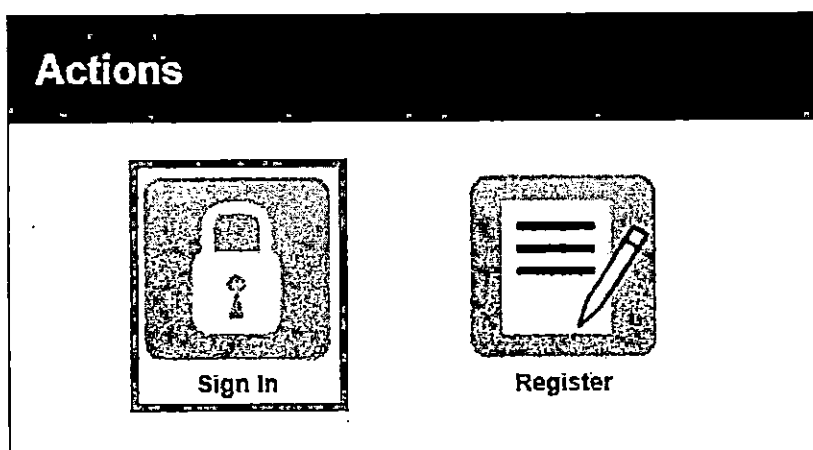
## Sign in to e-file

After you have created an account with Odyssey, you need to sign in to e-file your documents. If you have not registered as a user, click **Register**. For detailed instructions on how to register for an account see *How to E-File in Odyssey Step 2: Register to E-File*.



### Click Sign In

1. To sign in to your account visit: <https://illinois.tylerhost.net/ofswweb>
2. The Actions panel is where you sign into Odyssey or register as a user.
3. Click **Sign In**.



### Enter your email and password

1. Enter the email address and password you used when you registered for your e-filing account.
2. Click **Sign In**.



If you forgot your password, see *How to E-file in Odyssey Step 4: Create a New Password* for instructions on creating a new password.

**Please sign in to continue**

Email

Password

**Sign In**

[Forgot Password?](#)



**You have successfully signed in to your Odyssey account.**



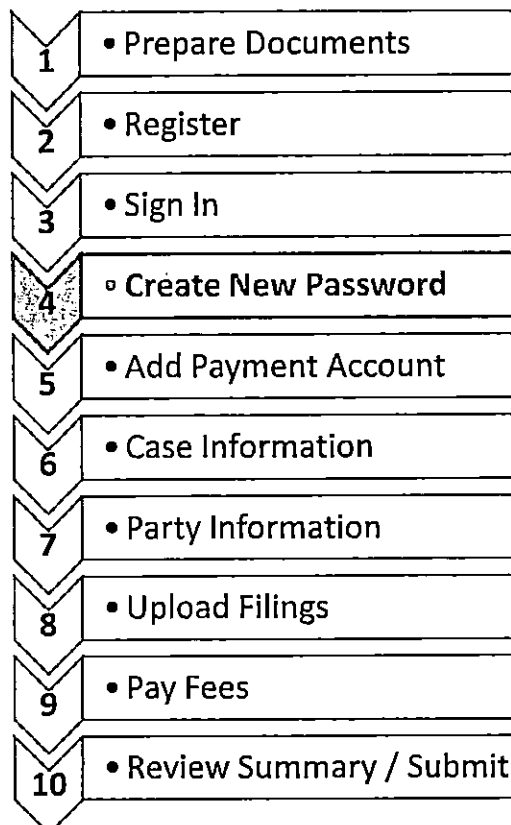
# E-Filing Guide for Self-Represented Litigants

How to E-File in Odyssey



## Step 4: Create a New Password if You Forgot It

### E-filing Steps



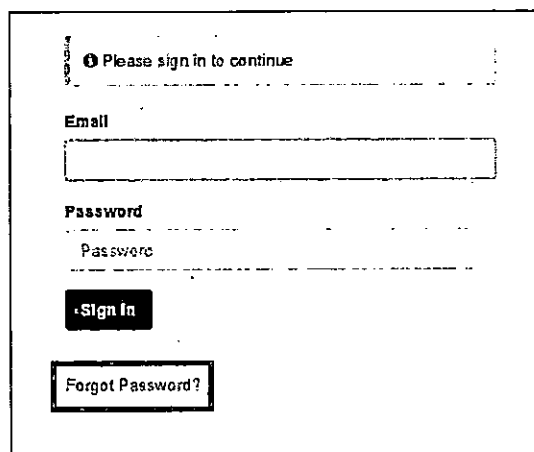


## Create a new password

If you forget your password, you need to create a new one. After several failed attempts to sign in to the system, your account will be locked. You will need to create a new password.

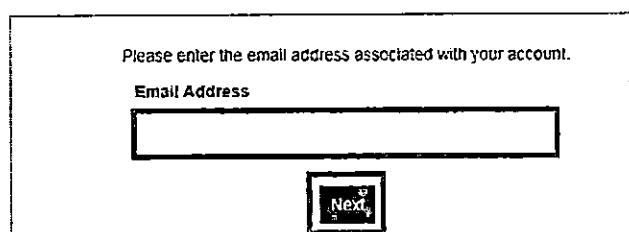
### Tell Odyssey you forgot your password

1. At the login screen, click **Forgot Password?**



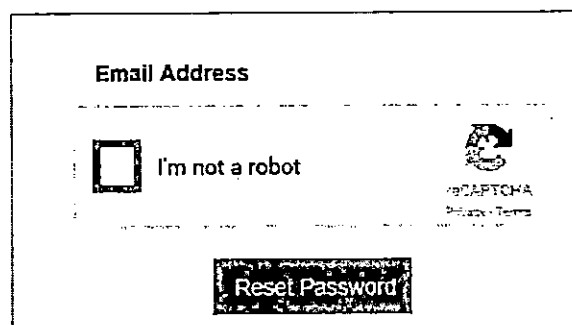
The screenshot shows the Odyssey login interface. At the top, it says "Please sign in to continue". Below this are two input fields: "Email" and "Password". There is a "Sign In" button and a "Forgot Password?" link at the bottom of the form.

2. Enter the email address you used when you registered for your Odyssey account.



The screenshot shows a screen with the text "Please enter the email address associated with your account." Below this is an "Email Address" input field and a "Next" button.

3. Click **Next**.

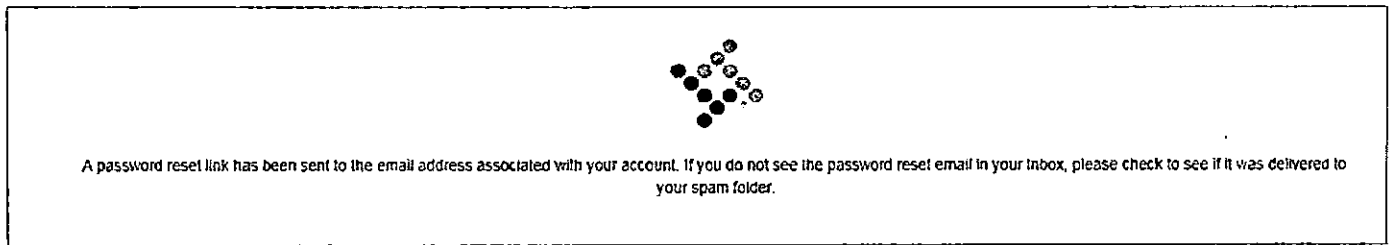


The screenshot shows a screen with the text "Email Address" at the top. Below this is a checkbox labeled "I'm not a robot" and a "Reset Password" button. There is also a CAPTCHA image and some small text at the bottom right.

4. Check the box next to **I'm not a robot**.

5. Click **Reset Password**.

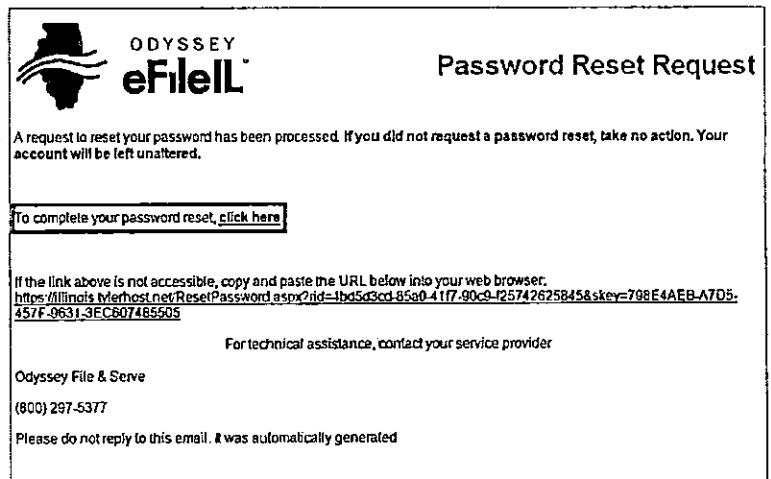
6. The following message will pop up. Check your email to find the link to reset your password.



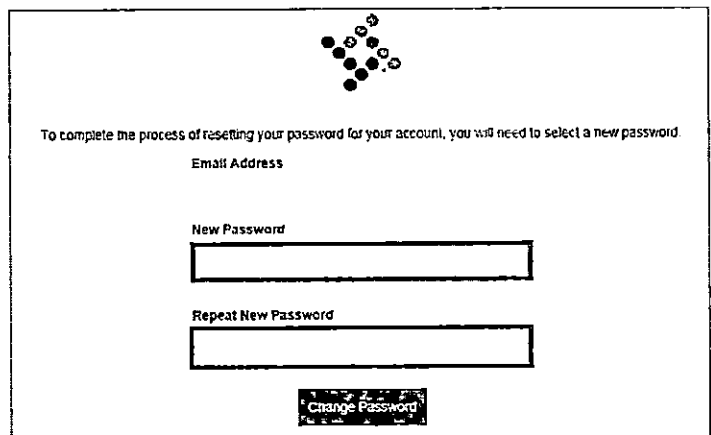
7. This is what the email will look like. Click [click here](#).



The email will be from [no-reply@tylerhost.net](mailto:no-reply@tylerhost.net). Check your junk or spam folders if you don't see the email in your inbox.

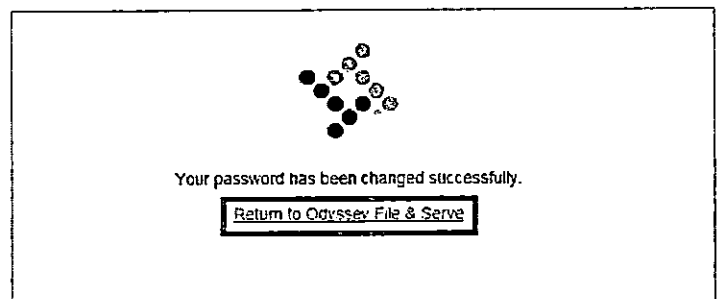


8. Enter your new password in the first box and then enter the same new password again.



9. Click **Change Password**.

10. This message will pop up and confirm you successfully changed your password.



**You have successfully created a new password. You can now login to your Odyssey account.**

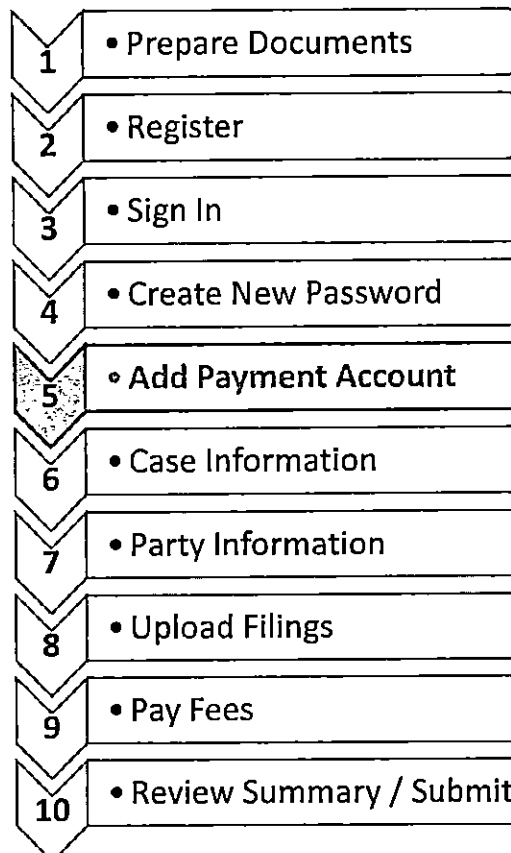


# E-Filing Guide for Self-Represented Litigants

## How to E-file in Odyssey Step 5: Add a Payment Account



### E-filing Steps







## Add a payment account

Before you can e-file your court documents, you must add a payment account. If there is a filing fee due, it must be paid at the time of e-filing. **If you cannot afford the filing fee**, you still have to follow the steps to create a payment account, but can select "Waiver." This does not mean your waiver will be approved, and you may have to create another payment account and pay filing fees if the waiver is denied.

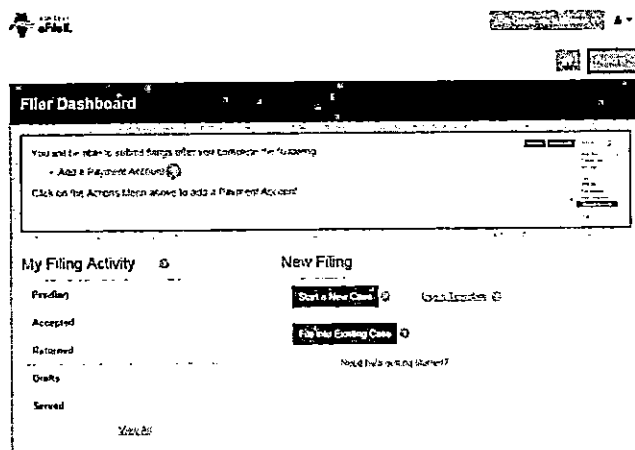


If you can afford to pay your filing fee, you must have a credit card or a checking account to pay online. If you do not have a credit card or checking account, one option is to buy a pre-paid debit card from most major stores such as Walgreens, Walmart, or Target. **If you want to pay in cash**, you need to ask your local court to find out if they accept cash payments and what their process is for paying the filing fee in person.

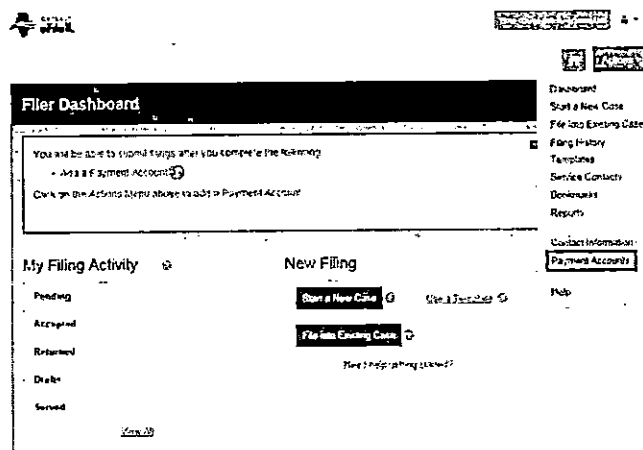


## Click Payment Accounts under Actions

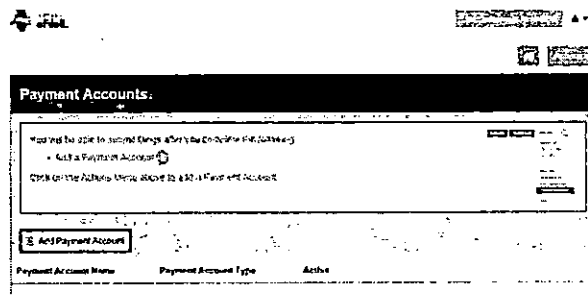
1. From the Home Page above Filer Dashboard, click the orange button for **Actions**.



2. Under Actions click **Payment Account**.



3. Click **Add Payment Account**.



**Payment Accounts:**

You will be able to accept charges after the Odyssey eFileLL account is set up.

[Add a Payment Account](#)

Click on the Address Menu above to add a new address.

**Add Payment Account**

Payment Account Name	Payment Account Type	Active

4. This pop up box will appear. Read the information and click **I Understand and Agree**.

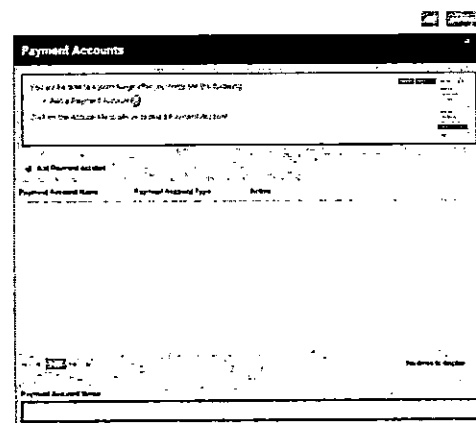
**Processing of Credit Cards**

Your account is never charged until your filing is accepted. If you see any pending charges on your account prior to acceptance, the pending charges are an authorization hold to ensure that the funds are available so your filing can be accepted without delay.

**\*\*If the filing is canceled or rejected, the funds will be released and will return to your account according to your financial institution's policies (typically three (3) to ten (10) business days).**

**I Understand and Agree**

5. Enter a name for the account payment. You may name it anything. This name is just so you can identify the payment account. This name will appear in Step 9: Pay Fees.



**Payment Accounts**

You will be able to accept charges after the Odyssey eFileLL account is set up.

[Add a Payment Account](#)

Click on the Address Menu above to add a new address.

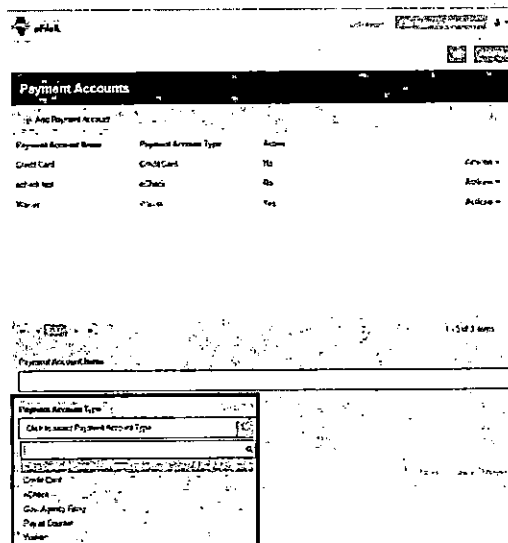
**Add Payment Account**

Payment Account Name	Payment Account Type	Active

**Payment Account Name**

6. Select how you want to pay. The options are: **Credit Card, eCheck, Gov. Agency Filing, Pay at Counter, or Waiver**.

- Credit Card also includes prepay debit cards.
- eCheck means direct payment from a checking or savings bank account.
- Gov. Agency Filing option will not apply to a self-represented litigant.
- Pay at Counter means that you want to pay in cash.
- Waiver means that you are requesting the court to waive your filing fees because you cannot afford the fees.



**Payment Accounts**

You will be able to accept charges after the Odyssey eFileLL account is set up.

[Add a Payment Account](#)

Click on the Address Menu above to add a new address.

**Add Payment Account**

Payment Account Name	Payment Account Type	Active

**Payment Account Name**

**Payment Account Type**

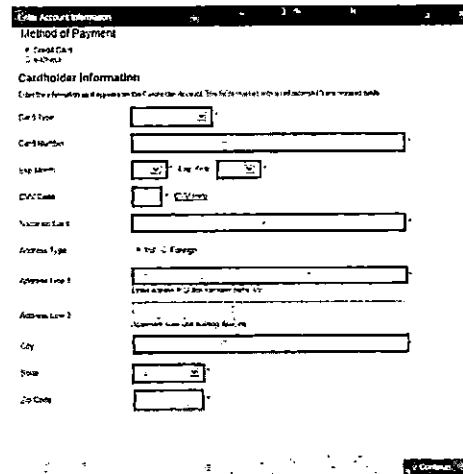
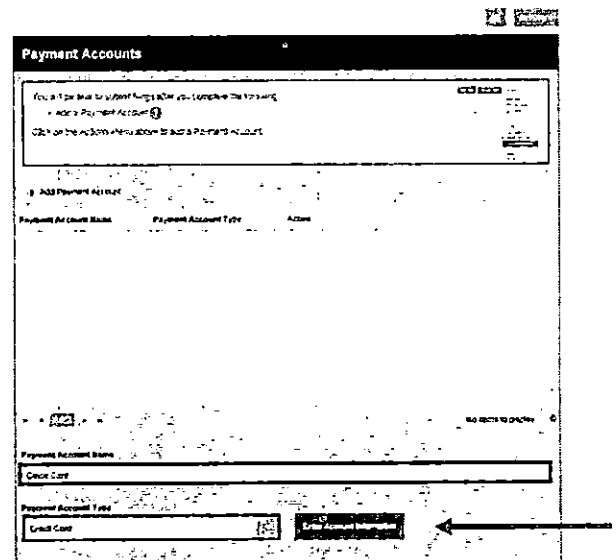
Click to select Payment Account Type

Credit Card  
eCheck  
Gov. Agency Filing  
Pay at Counter  
Waiver

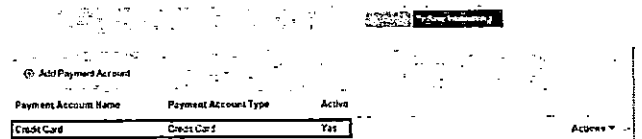
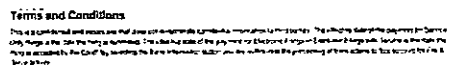
See the following pages for detailed information about each payment account type.



1. To use a credit card or prepay debit card, choose **Credit Card** in the drop down menu and create a Payment Account Name. This name is just for you to know which card you entered.



4. Review your card information, read the Terms and Conditions, and click **Save Information**.



**You may now e-file your court documents and pay with a credit card.**

## eCheck (bank account)



There is a convenience fee for paying by eCheck. You will pay an extra flat fee of 25 cents.

1. To pay using your bank routing and account number, choose **eCheck** in the drop down menu and create a Payment Account Name. This name is just for you to know which account you entered.

2. Click **Enter Account Information**.

3. Click the **eCheck** bubble at the top. Under Account Type, select whether you want to pay from your checking or savings account.

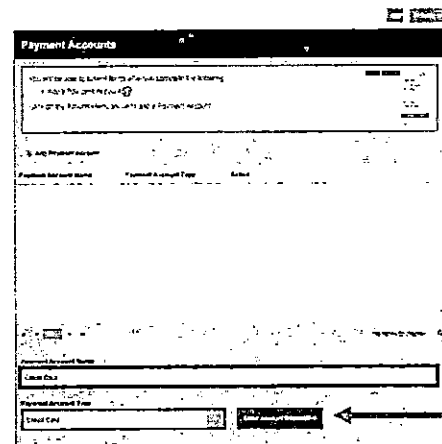
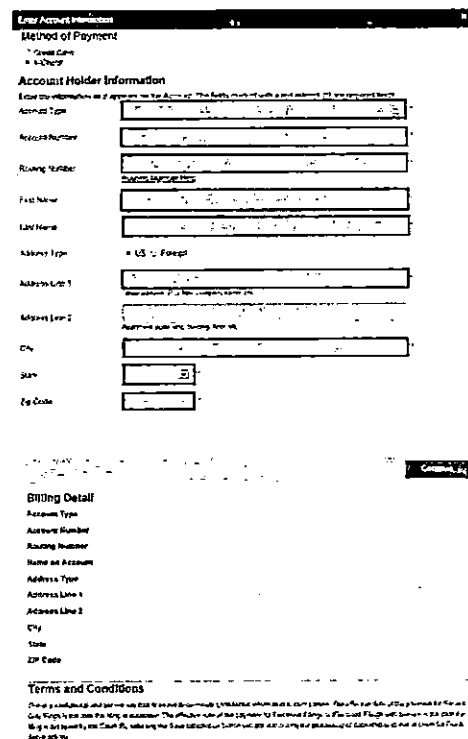
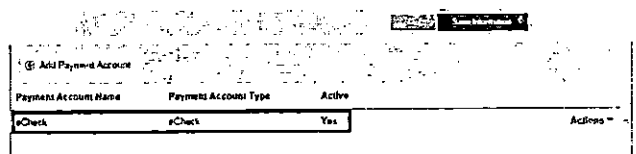
4. Enter that account information including account number and routing number. Click **Continue**.



If you need help finding your account or routing numbers on your check, click **Routing Number Help** under the Routing Number box.

5. Review your checking or savings information, read the **Terms and Conditions**, and click **Save Information**.

6. If approved, the type of payment will be listed in the box and the word "Yes" will be listed under active.

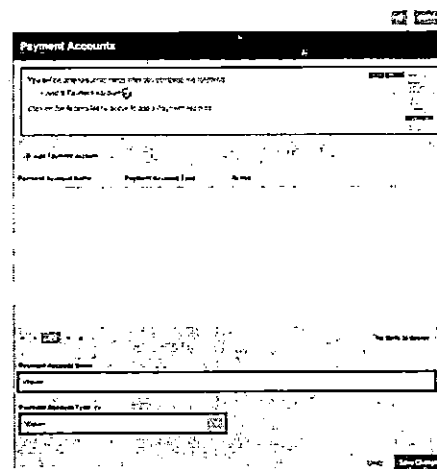





You may now e-file your court documents and pay with an eCheck.

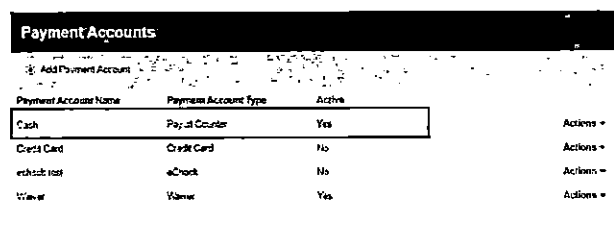
## Pay at Counter (cash)

1. If you want to pay in cash (and you've confirmed your local court accepts cash payments) choose **Pay at Counter** in the drop down menu and create a Payment Account Name. This name is just so you can identify the payment account.

2. Click **Save Changes**.



3. If you successfully chose Pay at Counter, "Pay at Counter" will be listed in the box and the word "Yes" will be listed under active.



Payment Account Name	Payment Account Type	Active	Actions
Cash	Pay at Counter	Yes	Actions =
Credit Card	Credit Card	No	Actions =
eCheck	eCheck	No	Actions =
Wire	Wire	Yes	Actions =



## Important note about the Pay at Counter payment account

- Selecting the Pay at Counter Payment Account does NOT mean you are allowed to pay in cash. You must contact your local court BEFORE e-filing to find out if they accept cash payments. If they do not, you CANNOT use the Pay at Counter Payment Account for the purpose of cash payments and your filing may be rejected. Some courts may also require that you e-file in person at the courthouse to be able to use the Pay at Counter payment account.

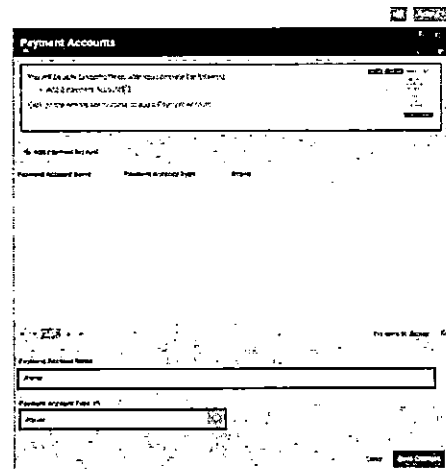


You may now e-file your court documents and Pay at Counter in cash.

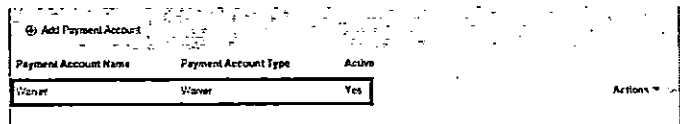
## Fee waiver

1. If you are going to file a fee waiver choose **Waiver** in the drop down menu and create a Payment Account Name. This name is just so you can identify the payment account.

2. Click **Save Changes**.



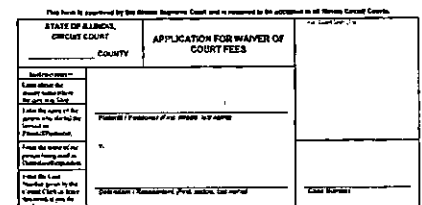
3. If you successfully chose Waiver, "Waiver" will be listed in the box and the word "Yes" will be listed under active.




## Important note about the Waiver payment account

- Selecting the Waiver Payment Account does NOT mean you will get your fees waived.

- If you are asking the court to waive your fees for the first time in this case, you must upload an *Application for Waiver of Court Fees* as a Lead Document. A judge will review your application and may require you to appear in court. You will receive an order either granting or denying your application. If your application is denied, you will need to create another payment account and pay your filing fees. If you do not upload the *Application*, your filing may be rejected.



- An *Application for Waiver of Court Fees* can be found under Fee Waiver for trial/circuit courts or under Appellate for appellate courts: <http://illinoiscourts.gov/Forms/approved/default.asp>. For more information about how to upload the Application as a Lead Document, see *How to E-File in Odyssey Step 8: Upload Your Documents in the Filings Section*.
- If the court already approved your *Application* in this case, you do NOT need to submit another application, but you MUST upload a copy of the signed *Fee Waiver Order* when you submit your court filing. You still select "Waiver" as your payment account.



You may now e-file your court documents with an application for fee waiver.

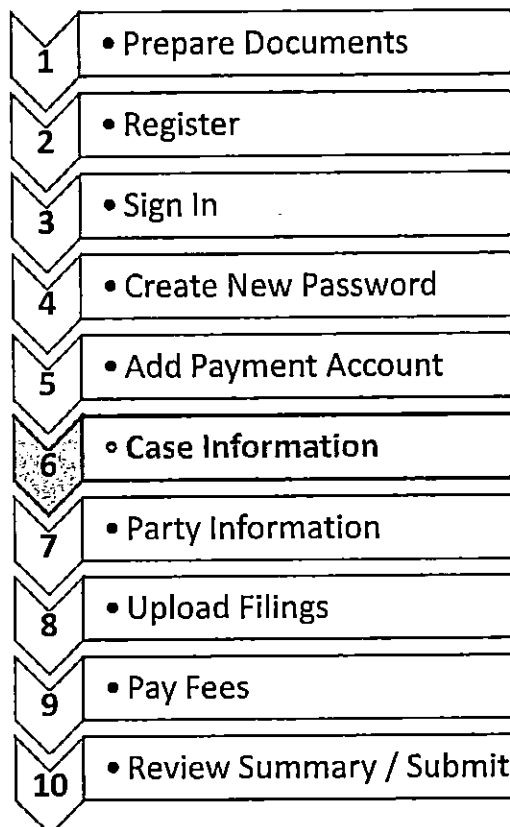


# E-Filing Guide for Self-Represented Litigants

## How to E-File in Odyssey Step 6: Enter your Case Information



### E-filing Steps



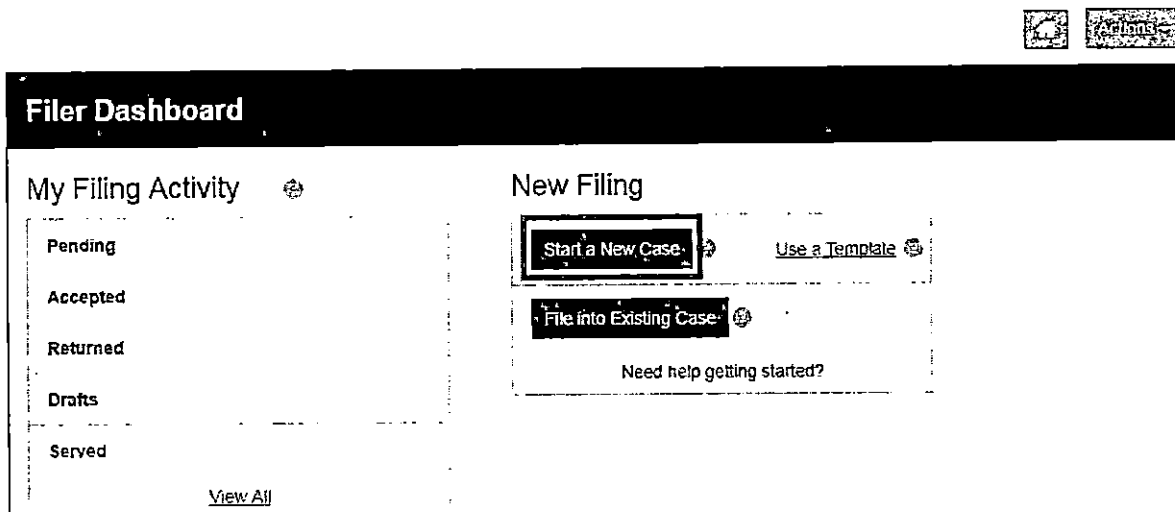


## Enter Your Case Information

This manual will go over starting a new case and filing into an existing case.

- To start a new case, you will need to know three pieces of information: (1) Location; (2) Category; and (3) Case Type.
- To file into an existing case, you will need to know two pieces of information: (1) Location; and (2) Case Number OR Party Name. (NOTE: Party Name is not searchable in some counties)

### New Case – Click Start a New Case

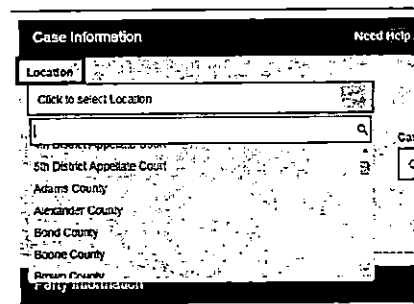


The screenshot shows the 'Filer Dashboard' with two main sections. On the left, 'My Filing Activity' lists 'Pending', 'Accepted', 'Returned', 'Drafts', and 'Served', with a 'View All' link at the bottom. On the right, the 'New Filing' section contains two buttons: 'Start a New Case' (highlighted with a red box) and 'File into Existing Case'. Above these buttons is a 'Use a Template' link. Below the buttons is a link that says 'Need help getting started?'.



### Choose the Location

1. The Location means the where the case will be heard.
  - a. New cases will be filed in the trial court in the County where your case will be heard.
    - i. Family law cases can be filed in the county that you or your spouse/the other parent live in.
    - ii. Cases for money or property can be filed where the defendant lives or where the events happened that you believe give you the right to sue. For example, where the accident occurred, contract was signed, or leased premises is located.
    - iii. Name change cases can be filed in the county where you live.



The screenshot shows the 'Case Information' form with the 'Location' dropdown menu open. The dropdown list includes '5th District Appellate Court', 'Adams County', 'Alexander County', 'Band County', 'Boone County', and 'Bryan County'. A search bar is visible at the top of the dropdown list.



- iv. If the County you are looking for does not show up, it means that County isn't using Odyssey yet. Contact your local court to find out how you should be e-filing your documents.



**FOR COOK COUNTY:** in the Location box you will need to know three pieces of information to make your selection

Click to select Location

- Cook County - Civil - District 1 - Chicago
- Cook County - Civil - District 2 - Skokie
- Cook County - Civil - District 3 - Rolling Meadows
- Cook County - Civil - District 4 - Maywood
- Cook County - Civil - District 5 - Bridgeview
- Cook County - Civil - District 6 - Markham

1. County (Cook)
2. Division (in Cook County the Division is what is described below as Category). The options are Chancery, Civil, County, Criminal, Domestic Relations, Domestic Violence, Juvenile, Law, Probate)
3. District (in Cook County there are 6 different districts, divided up by location. Chicago is District 1). To figure out what District your city is in, go to: <http://www.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org/NewWebsite/Departments.aspx?deptType=Districts>

- b. If you are filing to *appeal* a trial court's decision, select the Appellate District that your County is in.
- c. If you are filing to *appeal* an appellate court's decision, select Supreme Court of Illinois.



If you are filing in an Appellate or Supreme Court, please see the E-filing Guides specific to Civil Appeals for more information about how to e-file in those courts.

2. Click in the **Location** box and a drop down menu will appear. Scroll down through the list until you find the correct location and **click** on it.



## Choose the Category and Case Type

**Case Information** Need Help?

**Location**

Bureau County

**Category**

Click to select Category

**Case Type**

Click to select Case Type

Undo Save Changes

1. The Category for e-filing is the way the court has divided up and labeled groups of Case Types.
  - a. Categories are official legal terms used by the court and may not be easy to understand or guess which types of cases would be in which Category.
  - b. The Case Type is the topic you want to address with the court.

2. The common Categories (called Divisions in Cook County) are:

Adoption	Arbitration	Chancery	Civil
Dissolution (Divorce)	Eminent Domain	Family	Law
Law Magistrate	Miscellaneous Remedy	Mental Health	Municipal Corporation
Order of Protection	Probate	Small Claims	Tax

3. To figure out what Category to select, you need to know what kind of Case Type you have. Here are commonly used Case Types and which Category they are in:

Category (called Division in Cook County)	Common Case Types
Chancery	Foreclosure
Law Magistrate (Civil in Cook)	Eviction (rent under \$50,000) NOTE: Forcible Entry and Detainer means Eviction
Order of Protection (Domestic Violence in Cook)	Order of Protection; Stalking No Contact Order; Civil No Contact Order
Small Claims (Civil in Cook)	Contract; Tort; Small Claims \$10,000 or less
Dissolution (Domestic Relations in Cook)	Dissolution of Marriage/Civil Union or Legal Separation
Family (Domestic Relations in Cook)	Parentage/Paternity; Custody/Visitation/Child Support
Probate	Guardianship of a Minor
Miscellaneous Remedy (Chancery in Cook)	Certiorari (to review administrative decisions), Administrative Review
Miscellaneous Remedy (County in Chicago, Civil in suburban Cook)	Change of Name
Law	Contract or Tort-Money Damages
Criminal	Expungement

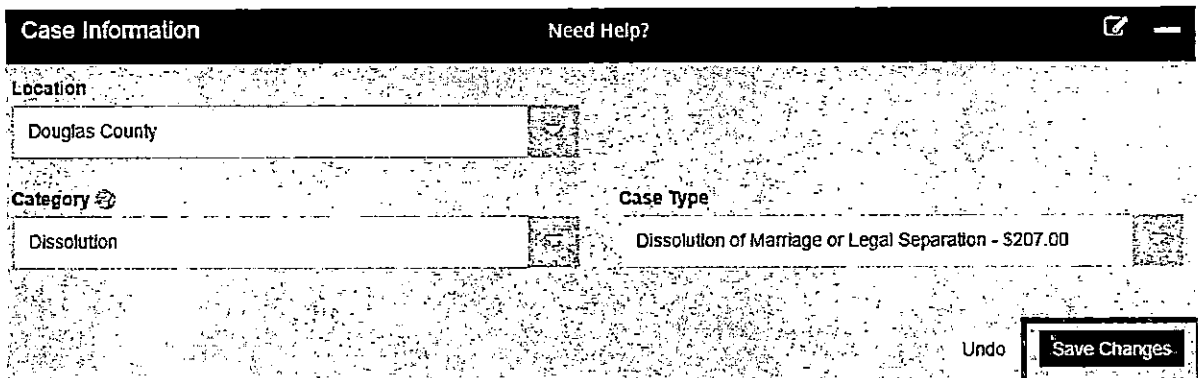
Dissolution  
means  
Divorce


4. Once you have figured out your Case Type and Category, you must first **click** the Category. Then the Case Types will show up, **click** on your Case Type.







All Categories and Case Types can be found in the appellate or trial court Configuration Standards on [www.efile.illinoiscourts.gov](http://www.efile.illinoiscourts.gov). Note, these standards do not apply to Cook County. Ask court staff if you need help with Location, Category, or Case Type.


5. Click **Save Changes**.



**Case Information** Need Help? 

**Location**  
 Douglas County 

**Category**  **Case Type**  
 Dissolution  Dissolution of Marriage or Legal Separation - \$207.00 

Undo 




You have successfully entered the Case Information for a New Case.

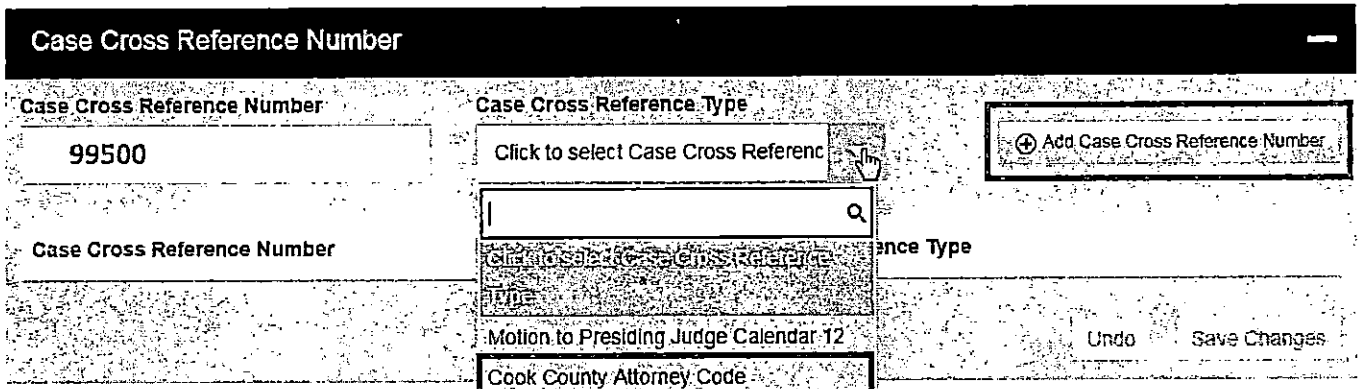


**Important note for Cook County ONLY - Case Cross Reference Number**

- There is one additional part of case information that applies only in Cook County. Once you hit **Save Changes**, a pop up box will appear. Read the message. Click **Done** and the new field will appear.


**Attention Cook County Filers!**  
 If you are an attorney, Insert Cook County Attorney Code Number in the case cross reference number field and Click 'Add'; if you are filing a motion, use the case cross reference field to add the word 'motion' and choose the motion type from the drop down and click 'Add'.






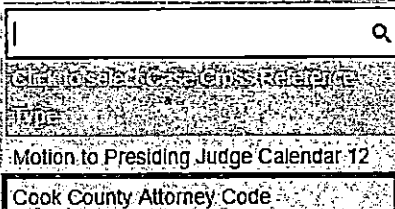

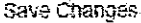
**Case Cross Reference Number** —

**Case Cross Reference Number**  
 99500

**Case Cross Reference Type**  
 Click to select Case Cross Reference 

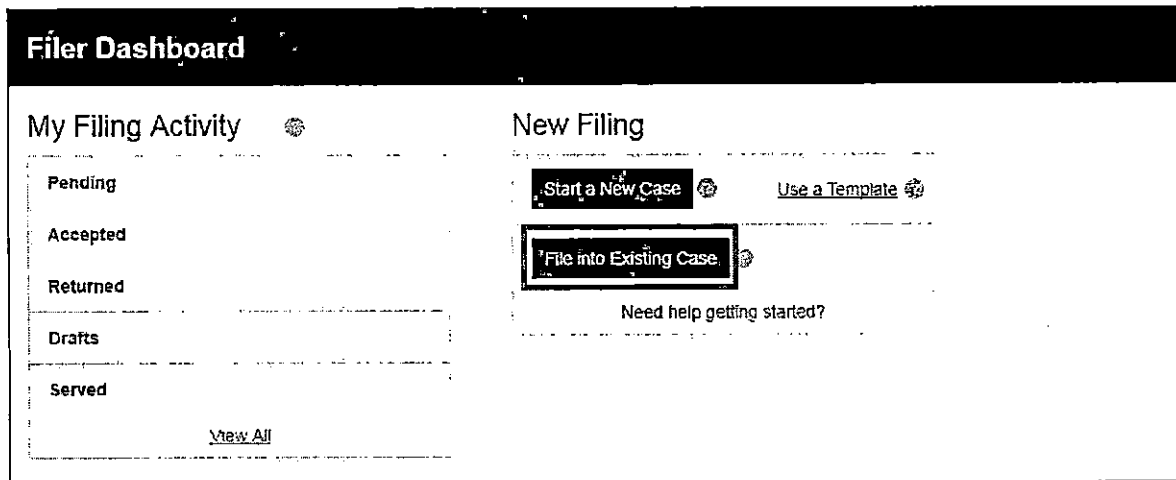


**Case Cross Reference Number**  
 Case Cross Reference Type

- Even though you are representing yourself, you **MUST** fill out this section.
  - a. Type in **99500** in the Case Cross Reference Number box.
  - b. Click on Case Cross Reference Type drop down menu and select **Cook County Attorney Code**.
  - c. Click **Add Case Cross Reference Number**.
  - d. Click **Save Changes**.
- If you are trying to file a motion, type the word **Motion** in the Case Cross Reference Number box and select **Motion** in the drop down menu.
  - a. Click **Add Case Cross Reference Number**, then click **Save Changes**.

## Existing Case – Click File Into Existing Case



**Filer Dashboard**

**My Filing Activity**

- Pending
- Accepted
- Returned
- Drafts
- Served

[View All](#)

**New Filing**

[Start a New Case](#) [Use a Template](#)

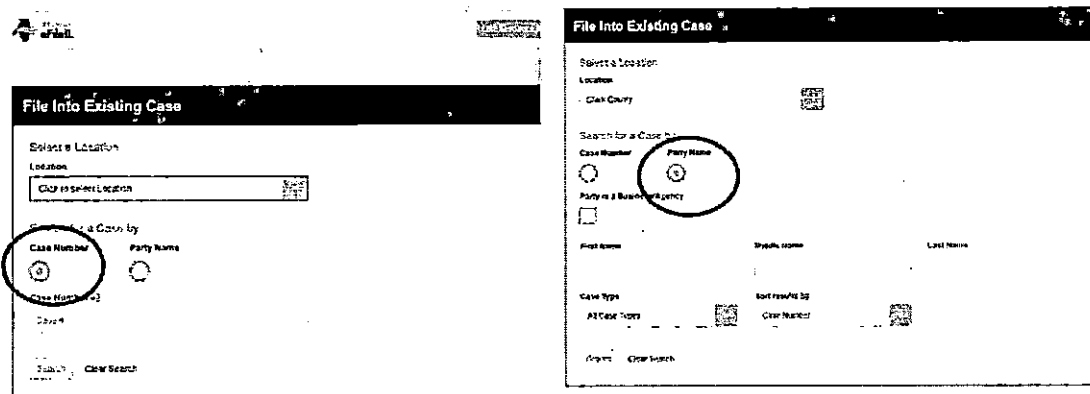
**File into Existing Case**

Need help getting started?

### Choose the Location

- The Location means where the case was filed.
  - If you are filing as part of a case at the trial court, select the County where the case was filed.
    - For Cook County, the Location will contain the County, Division, and District. More information can be found above.
  - If you are filing as part of a case on appeal, select the Appellate District or Supreme Court where the case was filed. Please see the E-filing Guides specific to Civil Appeals for more information about how to e-file in those courts.
- Click in the **Location** box and a drop down menu will appear. Scroll through until you find the correct location and **click** on it.

### Choose to search by Case Number or Party Name



**File Into Existing Case**

Select a Location

Location

Click to select Location

Select a Case by

Case Number ☐ Party Name ☐

Case Number

Party Name

First Name Middle Name Last Name

Case Type

All Case Types

Sort results by

Case Number

Apply Clear Search

Decide if you want to search by Case Number or by Party Name and **click** that button. NOTE: Party Name searches are not available in Cook County.

### 1. Case Number

- a. The Case Number can be found on the upper right corner of any court documents you've received about the case.
- b. The Case Number should be entered in a specific format, with no extra spaces or dashes.
  - i. Use the full 4 digits of the year, capital letters, remaining numbers
    1. For example: document says 15-d-1234, you would search 2015D1234
    2. If the case does not appear, ask court staff about specific format for your court
  - ii. *Exception:* Cook County cases in Civil Division that have the letter "M" in the case number, do NOT use the letter M when searching.
    1. For example: document says 18-M4-123456, you should search 20184123456
- c. Type in the number and click **Search**.

### 2. Party Name

- a. If you cannot find the Case Number, you can search by Party Name instead.
- b. You must enter a first and last name and then click **Search**.
- c. You can search by your name if you are a party in the case:

### 3. After you select Search, a list of cases will appear.

- a. If no cases appear, double check the case number and contact your local court to confirm the case number format.

07-SC-01010	Peoria County	OSF HEALTHCARE SY...	Confession & Judgment	Actions ▾
07-SC-01917	Peoria County	T-H PROFESSIONAL A...	Confession & Judgment	Actions ▾
12-SC-00010	Peoria County	FULLER, CHESTER C v...	Confession & Judgment	File Into Case
71-D-03293	Peoria County	SMITH CAROLE vs SM...	Custody Hearing	File into Case With Template
64-LM-05564	Peoria County	JOHN SMITH vs DEREK...	Arbitration & Award	View Service Contacts
87-LM-00015	Peoria County	CECU vs SMITH JOHN	Arbitration & Award	Bookmark This Case

### 4. Click on the Actions arrow to the right of the case information.

- a. Click on **File Into Case**.



### Important Note

- Not all existing cases have been put into the eFiling system yet. If your existing case does not show up after both a Case Number and Party Name search, you can still file into the case if you get the message below. Click on **File into an existing case**, then you will need to enter the information manually as if it were a new case. See the instructions above.

If your case is not listed above, you are attempting to efile into a case that has yet to receive an electronic submission and the case is not searchable from the court's case management system.

You are still able to file into this case, but you will first be required to manually input the case information.  
Any additional filings on this case will not require the manual data entry.



- If your case is not found and this message does not display, ask court staff to verify the case number and your next steps.



**You have successfully selected the Case Information for an Existing Case.**

Need Help? Call Odyssey's Filer Support Number: 1-800-297-5377

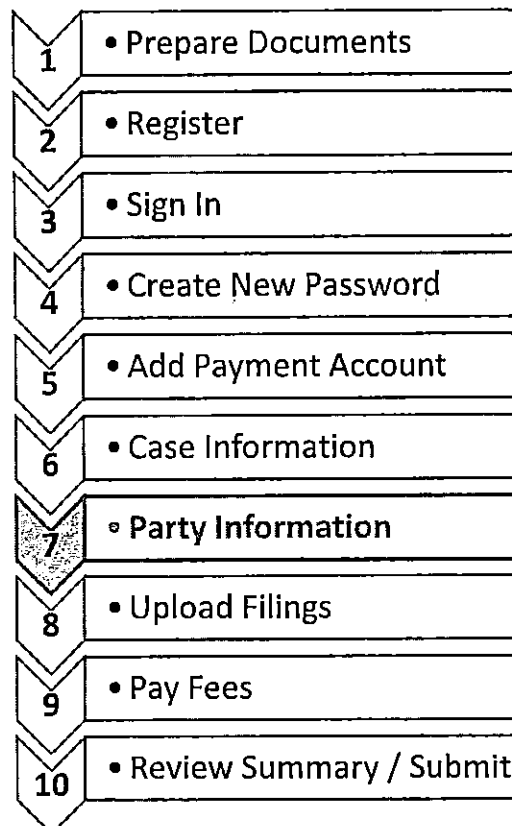


# E-Filing Guide for Self-Represented Litigants

## How to E-File in Odyssey Step 7: Enter the Party Information



### E-filing Steps





## Enter Party Information

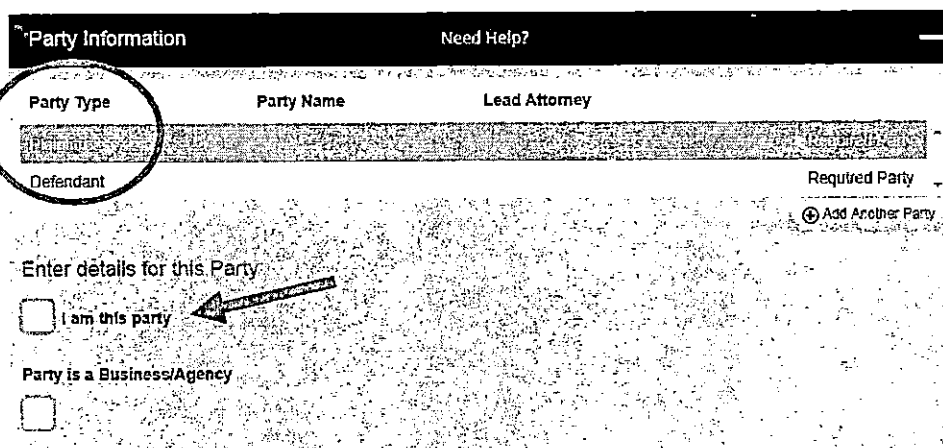
You need to enter information about yourself and the other party before e-filing.



### Enter Your Information

1. The Party Type that you are entering information for will be highlighted. It will always start with the Plaintiff or Petitioner.

If you are filing or starting the case, you are the Plaintiff or Petitioner. If someone else filed or started the case and you are responding to it, you are the Defendant or Respondent.



**Party Information** Need Help?

Party Type	Party Name	Lead Attorney
Plaintiff		
Defendant		

Required Party  
 + Add Another Party

Enter details for this Party

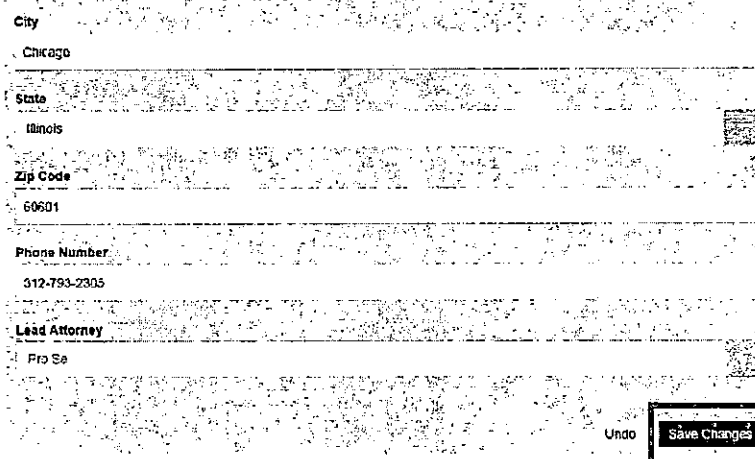
☐ I am this party

☐ Party is a Business/Agency

2. If you are the highlighted party, click the box that says "I am this party."

3. The name, address, and phone number you used when you registered for e-filing will pop up in the boxes.

4. Click **Save Changes**.



City  
Chicago

State  
Illinois

Zip Code  
60601

Phone Number  
312-793-2303

Lead Attorney  
Pro Se

Undo **Save Changes**

## ➡ Enter the Details of the Other Party or Parties

Once you have saved your information, the other Party Type will be highlighted.

### Party Information

#### Party Type

Plaintiff

Defendant

### ➡ Other Party is a Person

1. You must fill in their **First Name** and **Last Name**.
2. You may also fill in the other Party's street address, city, state, postal code, and phone number. None of those are required fields.
3. If the other Party has an attorney that has already filed something in the case, they will appear on the drop down menu under Lead Attorney. You can select them. If you know the other Party is representing themselves, you can select Pro Se. This is not a required field.

First Name	Middle Name	Last Name
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Country		
United States of America		
Address Line 1		Address Line 2
<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>
City	State	
<input type="text"/>	Click to select State	
Postal Code	Phone Number	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Lead Attorney		
Click to select Lead Attorney		
<input type="text"/>		
Pro Se		

### ➡ Other Party is a Business or Agency

1. Click the box that says "**Party is a Business/Agency.**"
2. You must fill in the **Business Name**.
3. You may also fill in the Business's street address, city, state, postal code, and phone number. None of those are required fields.
4. If the Business's attorney has already filed something in the case, they will appear on the drop down menu under Lead Attorney. You can select them. This is not a required field.

Enter details for this Party

☐ I am this party

☐ Party is a Business/Agency

☒ Party is a Business/Agency

Business Name

Country

United States of America

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

City

State

Click to select State

Postal Code

Phone Number

Lead Attorney

Click to select Lead Attorney



- Once you have entered the Other Party's information, click **Save Changes**.

Lead Attorney  
Pro Se

Undo

Save Changes



## Enter Additional Party's Information

If there are more than two parties in your case, you can add another party to your e-filing by clicking on **Add Another Party**.

Party Information			
Party Type	Party Name	Lead Attorney	
Plaintiff	Plaintiff Petitioner	Pro Se	Required Party
Defendant	ABC Business		Required Party
			<b>+ Add Another Party</b>

- Select the Party Type from a drop down menu.



The Party Type drop down menu will have every type of Party there is from Adoptive Child to Ward or additional Plaintiffs or Defendants. If you don't know the party type, ask court staff.

Enter details for this Party

Party Type

Click to select Party Type

Party is a Business/Agency

☐

First Name

Middle Name

Last Name

Country

United States of America

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

- If it is a person, you must fill in their **First Name** and **Last Name**. If it is a Business, you need to select that box and enter the **Business Name**.
- You may fill in the remaining information, but it is not required.
- Click **Save Changes**.
- Repeat as needed until you have entered the Party Information for all Parties in the case.



**You have successfully entered the Party Information.**



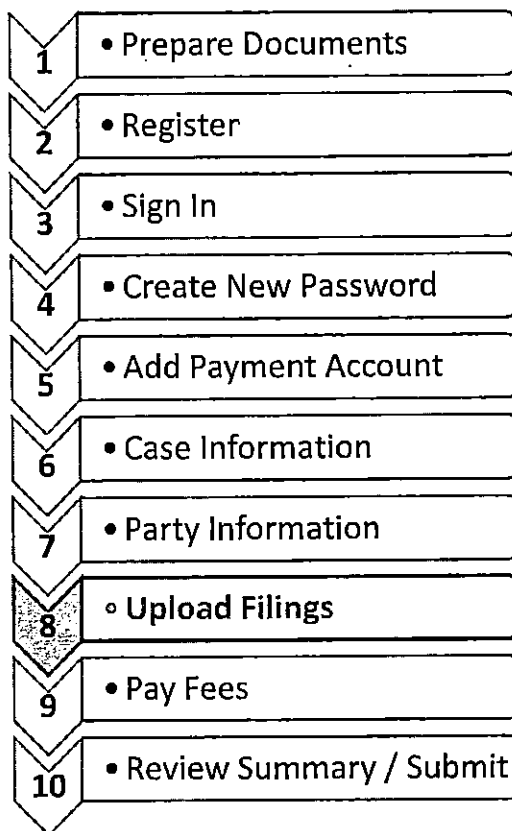
# E-Filing Guide for Self-Represented Litigants

How to E-File in Odyssey



## Step 8: Upload Your Documents in the Filings Section

### E-filing Steps





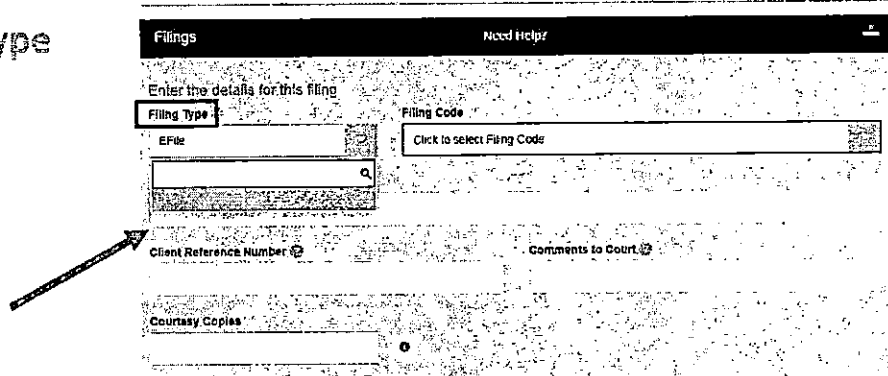
## Upload documents and complete the Filings section

The documents you want to file with the court have to be uploaded into the system. This all happens in the **Filings** section after you have completed the Case Information and Party Information. The whole packet of what you upload to file is called an "envelope" in the e-filing system.



### Choose the Filing Type

1. Click on **Efile**.

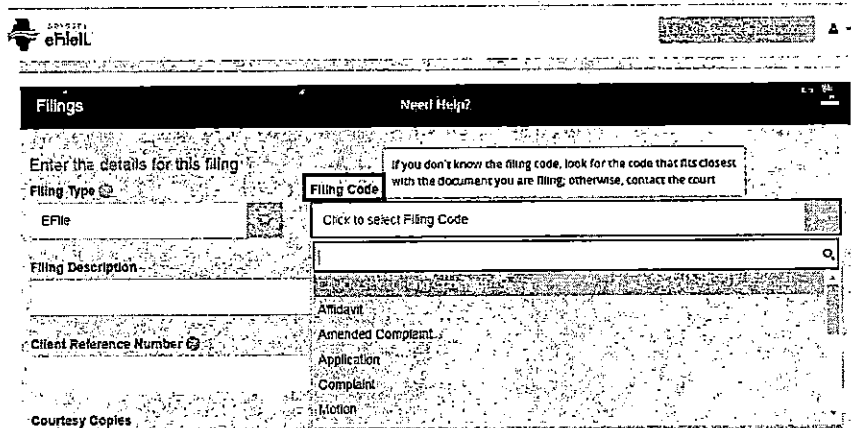



This box should be defaulted to Efile, but some Locations may also have Serve or EfileAndServe as Filing Type options. Make sure you select Efile or talk to your court staff about the other options. Note: selecting Serve or EfileAndServe does NOT qualify for service of process.



### Choose the Filing Code

1. Click on the **Filing Code** box for the drop down menu. Filing Code means the type of document that you are filing with the court (for example: Complaint, Motion, Waiver).
2. Click on the type of document you are filing.




If you don't know your Filing Code ask the court staff so there is no problem with your filing.

3. Once you select the Filing Code, you have the option of filling out four boxes, but they are not required.

a. Filing Description (optional)

i. This is just for you to remember what you are filing.

b. Client Reference Number (optional)


i. This is a tracking number for lawyers to use to know which client's case they are filing in. Since you are representing yourself, you won't use this box.

c. Comments to Court (optional)

i. These comments are for the court reviewer to read when assessing your document.

d. Courtesy Copies (optional)

i. You may enter a list of email addresses (separated by a comma) for where you want the document sent.

 **Note: this is a courtesy and does NOT qualify for service of process or proper notice.**

Filing Description
Client Reference Number
Comments to Court
Courtesy Copies

## Explanation of Lead Documents, Attachments, and Document Size

### What is a Lead Document?

- Any document that you need the court to look at to be able to give you what you want.
  - For example, if you want the court to grant your request to move your court date, upload your Motion for a Continuance as a Lead Document.
- All notice documents (such as a Notice for Court Date, Notice of Motion) are Lead Documents.
- You can file more than one Lead Document at a time.
  - For example, you could have Lead Document 1: Notice of Motion; Lead Document 2: Motion for a Continuance; and Lead Document 3: Application for Waiver of Court Fees.
  - An *Application for Waiver of Court Fees* is always a Lead Document and should be filed at the same time as your other documents. If the court already approved your Application for Waiver of Court Fees, you should file a copy of the approved *Order* as an attachment to anything you file after that.

### What are Attachments?

- A category of filing that is only an option in some counties and for some types of Filing Codes. If you don't see Attachments as an option, file everything in the Lead Document section. You can do that by making the Lead Document and any attachments/exhibits one PDF, and upload as a Lead Document.
- Any document that you reference in your Lead Document, but is not technically part of the Lead Document. They are usually called exhibits or attachments.
  - For example, if you write an Answer in an eviction case saying why you shouldn't be evicted, that written explanation is the Lead Document. In the Answer, you reference a receipt for paying rent. The copy of the receipt could be labeled Exhibit or Attachment 1 and would be an Attachment, not a Lead Document.

### What are the Document Size Limits?

- For Trial Courts, each document cannot be larger than 25MB and a combined total of 50MB per filing.
- For the Supreme Court and the Appellate Courts the file size limit is to 150MB.

## Upload First Lead Document (Required)

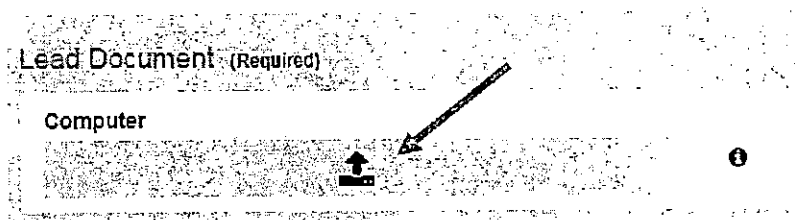


All Lead Documents **MUST** be uploaded as separate Lead Documents or your filing may be rejected. This means that you have to scan or save each Lead Document separately so you can upload it separately. Generally speaking, most filings will have *at least* 2 Lead Documents: (1) the main document you are filing and (2) a notice or proof of delivery document.

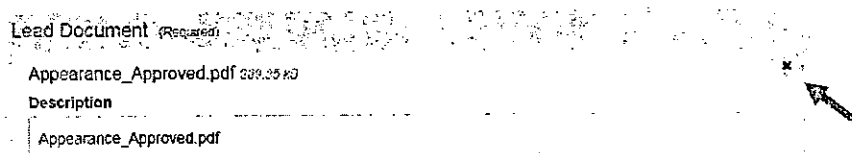


If any Lead Document is more than one page long, all the pages of the same document should be scanned/saved as one document and uploaded as one document. For example, if your Motion is 3 pages long, all 3 pages should be uploaded as one Lead Document.

1. Click on the **Upload Icon** under the Lead Document heading.

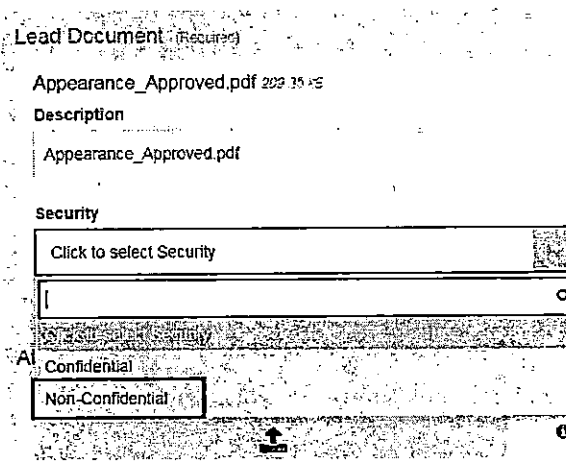


2. A Window will pop up where you will select your document.
3. Find where the document is saved on the computer (desktop, documents folder, flash drive).
4. Select the document you would like to file and click **Open**. The document title will appear in the Description Box.



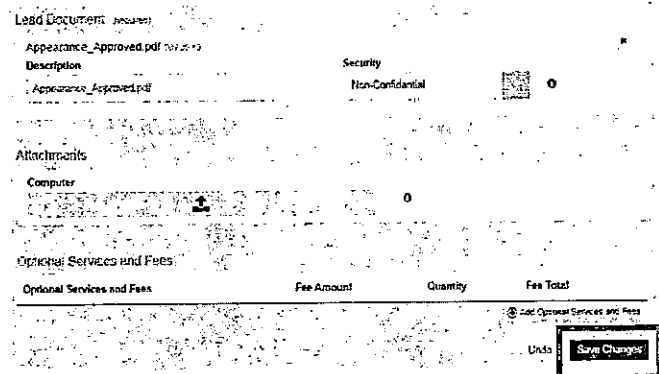
5. If you selected the wrong document, you can delete it by clicking on the **X** in the right corner.

6. Once you have the correct document, select the drop down menu for the **Security** box. Click whether the document is public (non-confidential) or confidential.



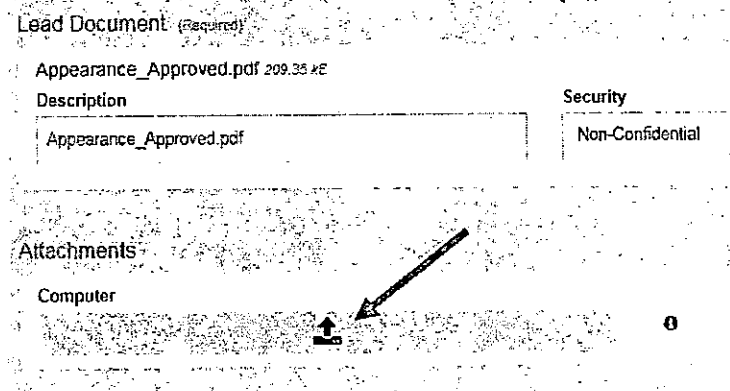
Most court documents are public (non-confidential) even though they contain personal information that you may like to keep private. You may need a court order to be able to select confidential. Please speak to court staff before selecting confidential because your filing may be rejected.

7. If your Lead Document doesn't have attachments or optional services, Click **Save Changes**. If your Lead Document has attachments or you want optional services, see below.



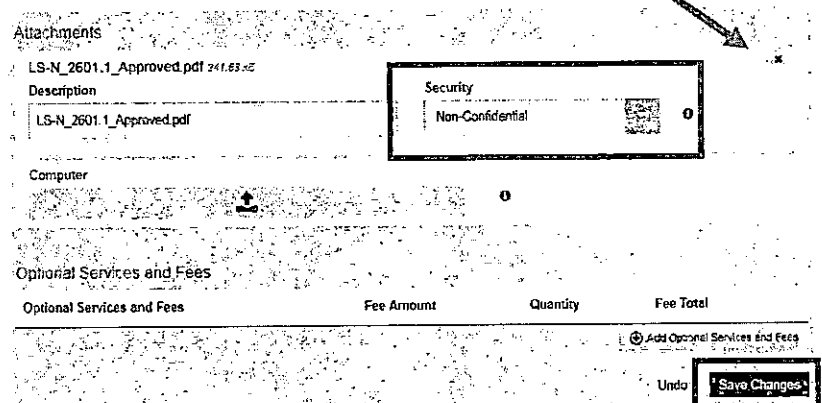
## Upload Attachments (Optional)

1. Click on the **Upload** Icon under the Attachments heading.
2. A Window will pop up where you will select your document.
3. Find where the document is saved on the computer (desktop, documents folder, flash drive).



4. Select the document you would like to file and click **Open**. The document title will appear in the Description Box.
5. If you selected the wrong document, you can delete it by clicking on the X in the right corner.

6. Once you have the correct document, select the drop down menu for the **Security** box. Select whether the document is public (non-confidential) or confidential.



7. Click **Save Changes** (unless you want Optional Services, see next page).

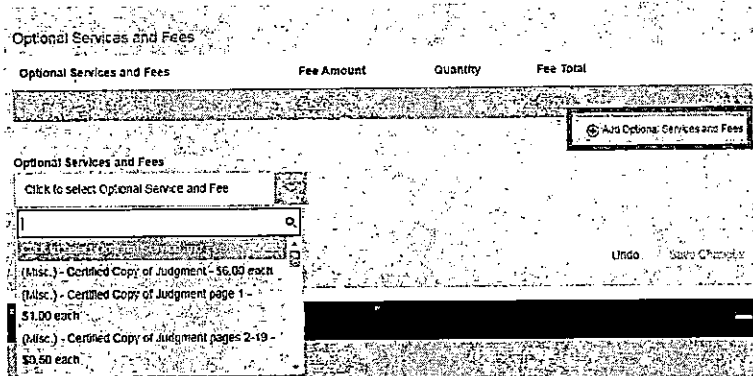
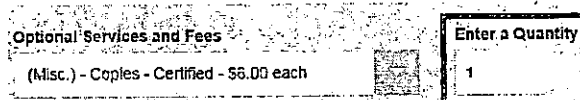


Most court documents are public (non-confidential) even though they contain personal information that you may like to keep private. You may need a court order to be able to select confidential. Please speak to court staff before selecting confidential because your filing may be rejected.

## Optional Services and Fees (Optional)

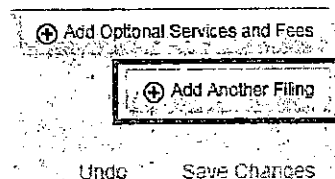
Unless you need something like certified copies of judgments, a jury demand, or an alias summons, you do not have to do anything in this section.

1. Click **Add Optional Services and Fees** and look through the drop down menu to see what is offered.
2. Click on the Service you want. Be sure not to click anything you already selected in the Filing Code, or you may be charged twice.
3. If applicable, type the **number** of that service you want in the Enter a Quantity box.
4. Click **Save Changes**.

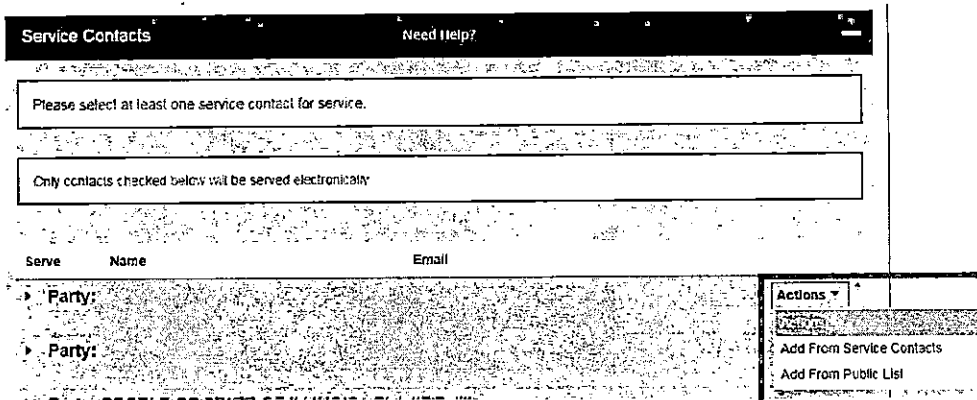
## Upload Additional Lead Document

1. Add additional Lead Documents by clicking the **Add Another Filing**.
2. Follow the instructions above for Uploading another Lead Document.
3. Repeat for all Lead Documents in your case.



## Service Contacts

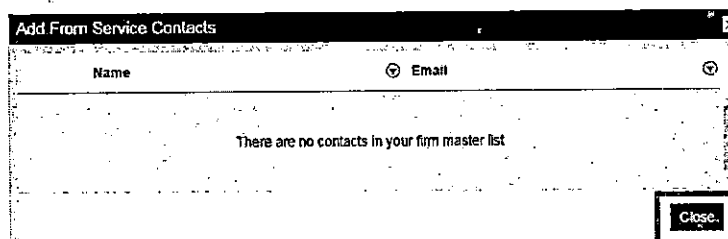
After uploading your documents, if you see the Service Contacts box it means you selected Serve or EfileAndServe for the Filing Type.



1. Click **Actions** next to the party you want to send email notice to. Note: this gives notice to the other side, but NOT qualify for service of process.

2. Click on **Add from Service Contacts** or **Add From Public List** to find the email you want to send to.
3. If you find the email, Click on it.
  - a. Click **Save Changes**.

4. If you get a message saying there are no contacts or no items to display, click **Close**.



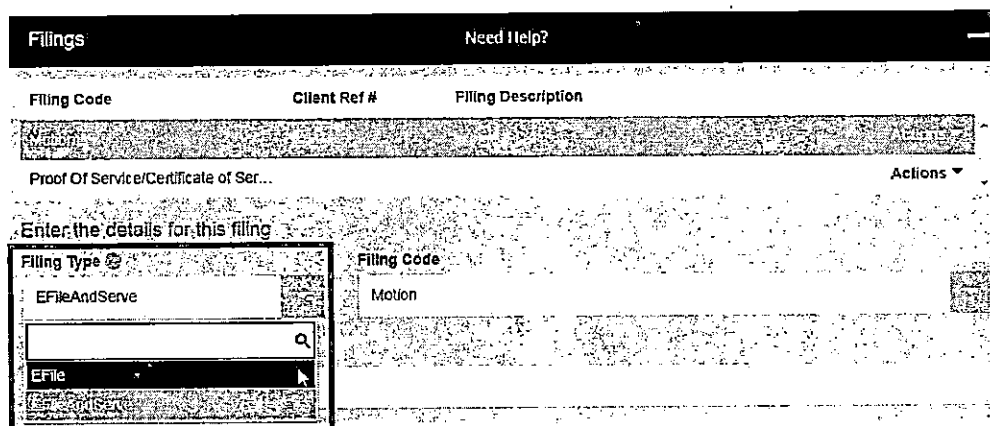
5. If you don't want to send anyone notice of the filing by email or if no contacts are listed, you can get rid of this section by going back to the Filings Section. You will see all of the Lead Documents you have uploaded.

- a. Click on the first **document**. It will now be shaded blue and the information about the document will open below.

- b. Click on the dropdown menu for **Filing Type**.

- c. Change the Filing Type to **Efile**.

- d. Scroll down and click **Save Changes**.



- e. Click on the next document and change the Filing Type to Efile. Make sure all Lead Documents have just Efile as the Filing Type.



**You have successfully uploaded your documents/completed the Filings section.**



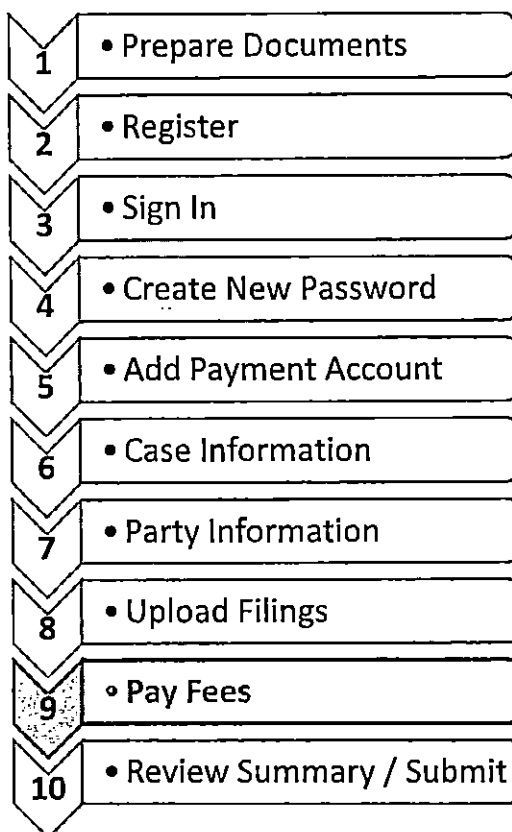


# E-Filing Guide for Self-Represented Litigants

## How to E-File in Odyssey Step 9: Pay Fees



### E-filing Steps





## Finalize Fees

### Select a Payment Account

If you need to leave this page to create your payment account, you can find and resume work on this draft envelope by clicking on "Drafts" on your Filer Dashboard.

Click here to create a payment account if it is not listed in the dropdown.

If you did not create a Payment Account when you registered for e-filing, please see *How to E-file in Odyssey Step 5: Add a Payment Account* for instructions on how to do so.



## Review the Documents to be Filed

1. Make sure that the Fees section lists all the documents you want to file.
2. If not, return to the Filings section to add or delete documents.

**Fees**
Need Help?

▼ Motion	Description	Amount
	Filing Fee	\$0.00
		Filing Total: \$0.00
▼ Waiver	Description	Amount
	Filing Fee	\$0.00
		Filing Total: \$0.00
▼ Notice	Description	Amount
	Filing Fee	\$0.00
		Filing Total: \$0.00
Total Filing Fee		\$0.00
		Envelope Total: \$0.00

Payment Account 
Click to select Payment Account

Party Responsible for Fees 
Click to select Party Responsible for Fees



Party Responsible for Fees actually means who is submitting the filing. Always select yourself for this field.



### Important note for Cook County ONLY – Ad Damnum

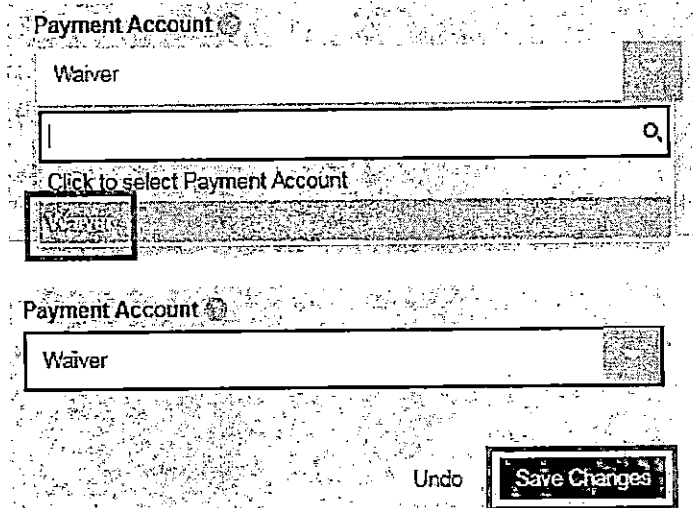
- This field called *Ad Damnum* may appear in the fees section. It means the amount of money you are asking for. You must type in the total amount of money you ask for in your document. If you don't type in the amount, your document could be rejected.

- a. For example, if you are file a small claims case asking for \$4000 in your complaint, type \$4000 into the *Ad Damnum* box.

Ad Damnum

## Select a Payment Account

1. Click on the drop down menu.
2. **Select** the Payment Account (that you created during registration) you want to use for this filing (Credit, eCheck, Pay at Counter, or Waiver).
  - a. Select Pay at Counter if:
    - i. You want to pay in cash and you have confirmed that your court accepts cash.
  - b. Select Waiver if:
    - i. You are filing an *Application for Waiver of Court Fees* and one of your Lead Documents is the Application; or
    - ii. You have been approved for a Fee Waiver and one of your Attachments is the signed order from the judge.



3. Click **Save Changes**.
4. If you used Credit or eCheck, you have paid your court fees.
5. If you selected Pay at Counter you will need to pay in cash before your filing will be processed.
6. If you have submitted an *Application for Waiver of Court Fees*, you will need to check with the court about what you need to do next, if anything. Some courts require you to go to an in-person hearing before a judge will decide if you get the waiver. Make sure you follow your court's process. Your application could be denied if you don't follow the court's process. If your application is denied, you will need to pay your filing fees.



If something has changed about your Credit or eCheck accounts since they were approved during registration, this could cause your filing to be rejected when you e-file. Make sure your payment account information is up to date and accurate before e-filing.



**You have now successfully completed the Fees section for e-filing. Please see next page if filing in Cook County.**



## Important note for Cook County ONLY

There are two additional fields under the Fees section only in the Cook County eFiling system.

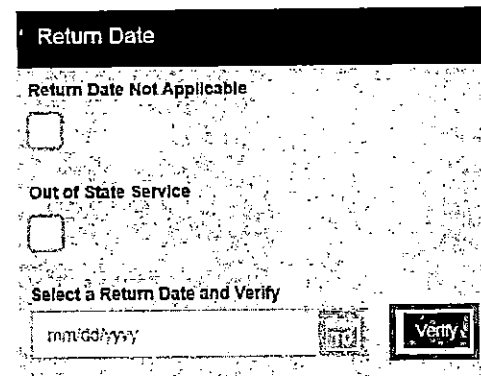


### Return Date

The Return Date is the first court date for certain Divisions.

1. Click **Verify**.

- If your type of case does not require a return date, the system will place a check in the "Return Date Note Applicable" box. Click **Save Changes**.
- If your type of case requires a return date, the system will list the first available date.



- If you are available that day, click **Save Changes**.

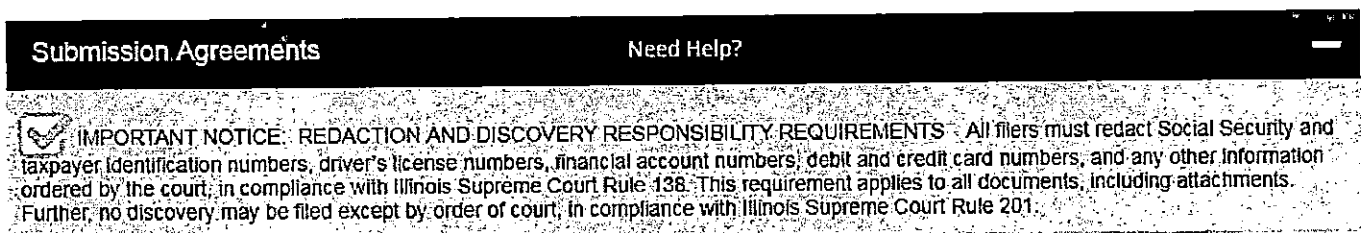


- If you are unavailable that day, click on the **Calendar** button.
- Select a later date you want.
- Click **Verify**.
- If your date is available, the system will say "Return Date has been verified." If your date is not available, the system will give you the next available date and say "Return Date has changed!"
- Click **Save Changes**.



### Submission Agreement

1. Read the message.



2. Click the box to check off that you have read the message.

If you have questions about the Return Date or the Submission Agreement, ask your court staff.



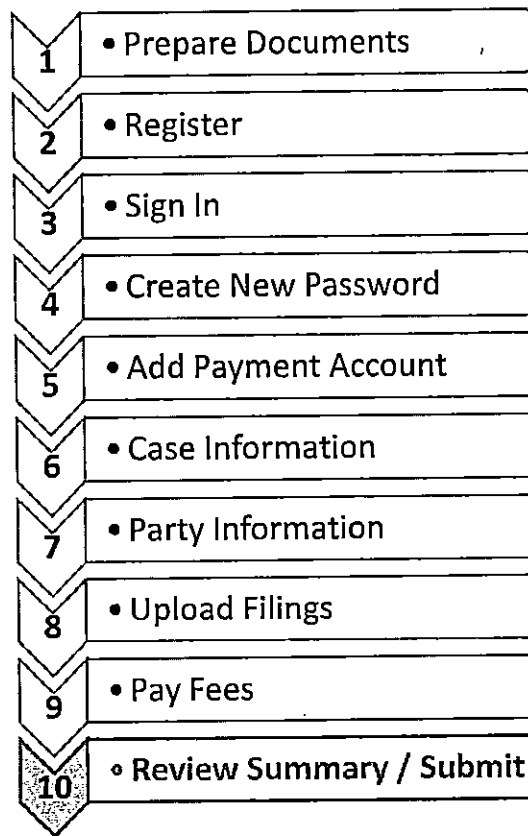
# E-Filing Guide for Self-Represented Litigants

How to E-File in Odyssey



## Step 10: Review the Summary & Submit Your E-filing

### E-filing Steps





## Review E-file Summary & Submit E-file

Once you have completed all the e-filing steps (Case Information, Party Information, Filings, and Fees), you can review a **Summary** of your filing before submitting it. After you review your Summary, you must **Submit** your filing to the court to complete e-filing. The whole packet of what you submit to the court is called an "envelope" in the e-filing system.



Click Summary

1. Scroll to the bottom of the webpage after you've completed the Case Information, Party Information, Filings, and Fees sections.

2. Click **Summary**.



If you have not entered all the required information for your e-file, you will not be able to review a Summary of your e-filing envelope.

Case Information

Location

Christian County

Category

Dissolution

Case Type

Dissolution of Marriage or Legal Separation - \$186.00

Undo

Save Changes

Party Information

Party Type	Party Name	Lead Attorney	
Plaintiff/Petitioner	Jane Doe	Pro Se	Required Party ^
Defendant/Respondent	John Doe		Required Party v
			+ Add Another Party

Filings

Filing Code	Client Ref #	Filing Description	
Motion		Motion	Actions ^
Waiver		Fee Waiver	Actions ^
Notice		Notice of Motion	Actions ^

Fees

Need Help?

Motion

Description

Filing Fee

Amount

\$0.00

Filing Total: \$0.00

Waiver

Description

Filing Fee

Amount

\$0.00

Filing Total: \$0.00

Notice

Description

Filing Fee

Amount

\$0.00

Filing Total: \$0.00

Total Filing Fee

Court Case Fee

\$0.00

\$186.00

Envelope Total: \$186.00

Waiver selected

Payment Account

Waiver

Undo

Save Changes

Save as Draft

Summary

## Review your e-file Summary

1. After you click Summary, review the Case Information, Party Information, Filings, and Fees.
2. If anything is incorrect, click **Back**. Once on the previous page, you can click into any section that is incorrect and make the changes you want.

Review and submit your envelope

Case Information		
Location Christian County	Category Dissolution	Case Type Dissolution of Marriage or Legal Separation

Party Information		
Party Type Plaintiff/Petitioner	Party Name Jane Doe	Lead Attorney Pro Se
Defendant/Respondent	John Doe	

Filings		
Filing Code	Client Ref #	Filing Description
Motion		Motion
Waiver		Fee Waiver
Notice		Notice of Motion

Fees		
<div> <div>Motion</div> <div>Waiver</div> <div>Notice</div> </div>		<div>Total Filing Fee</div> <div>Envelope Total: \$0.00</div> <div>Waiver selected</div>
Payment Account	Waiver	

Back

Submit

## Submit your e-filing

1. Once you review your e-file summary and make sure the information is correct, click **Submit**.

Back



You have successfully reviewed and submitted your e-filing envelope to the court.



Submitting your e-filing envelope in the system is the first step in giving your documents to the courts. Once you submit the e-filing envelope, the Circuit Clerk's office will review the filing. The Clerk will either accept or reject your filing. **Check your email for notification from the court about whether your filing is accepted or rejected.**

Need Help? Call Odyssey's Filer Support Number: 1-800-297-5377

Page 3 of 3