

**WASHINGTON COUNTY DISTRICT CLERK**  
**HELPFUL HINTS FOR E-FILING OF CIVIL, FAMILY LAW AND CRIMINAL**  
(For questions or concerns when preparing to e-file please contact our office at 979-277-6200)

The Texas Supreme Court has issued a mandate for e-filing of all **Civil and Family Law** cases for Washington County effective **January 1, 2016**.

The Texas Supreme Court has issued a mandate for e-filing of all **Criminal Law** cases for Washington County effective **July 1, 2019**.

1. All filings are required to be e-filed if you are represented by an Attorney.
2. When entering your parties and addresses into your Electronic Service Provider, please ensure that all party names and address information is complete.
3. Please ensure that all Attorney and/or Pro-Se information is provided in the signature block. A signature is required per the Mandate.

Either by: /s/ plus name, digital signature or handwritten signature.

- a. For Attorneys the information required: Full Name, Bar Number, Address, Phone Number and E-mail
- b. For Pro-Se the information required: Full Name, Address, Phone Number and E-Mail

4. **DO NOT include COMMAS, DASHES, OR SPACES in the CAUSE NUMBER. (THIS WILL CAUSE FILING TO BE “REJECTED”.)**

5. When filing a new CIVIL case, please make sure that you include all fees. If you are requesting additional issuance make sure you select the appropriate fee associated with the document. **Please include the costs for copying petition/motion to be attached to citation. (.50 per page)**

6. Documents must be a single PDF.

7. All pleadings that require a file stamp should be the **LEAD DOCUMENT**. You can have **multiple lead documents in a “Single” envelope**. This includes Cover Letters as lead documents.

8. **Attachments DO NOT** receive file-marks. If exhibits are referred to in document than file as part of LEAD document. **DO NOT** make Exhibits Attachments.

9. When filing a motion **WITH** a proposed order, please file motion as the lead document.

**PLEASE NOTE: If a document is e-filed for a court hearing scheduled within 24 hours, you will need to bring documents with you to court.**

# WASHINGTON COUNTY DISTRICT CLERK

## E-FILE FAQ

- 1. When is electronic filing mandatory in Washington County?** E-filing is mandatory as of January 1, 2016 for Washington County **Civil and Family Law cases**. E-filing is mandatory as of July 1, 2019 for Washington County **Criminal cases**.
- 2. Does the filer have to use E-File.txcourts.gov as their electronic filing service provider (EFSP)?** No. You may choose your own certified EFSP. An EFSP acts as the intermediary between you and the eFileTexas.gov system.
- 3. What is an e-File envelope?** An electronic filing envelope sends your document from eFileTexas.gov to the court system.
- 4. How many documents may be in an envelope? Do I have to use a new one each time?** You can have multiple lead documents and attachments in the same envelope, as long as they belong in the same case, during the same transaction. They must be searchable and book marked. Your documents will be returned for correction if you file something as an attachment that should be a lead document.
- 5. Must a document be in PDF format?** Yes, on a 8.5X11 page size, with a resolution of 300 DPI.
- 6. What is the maximum file size that can be electronically submitted?** For optimal manageability, the eFileTexas.gov recommends that files do not exceed 5MB per document and 25 MB per envelope.
- 7. What documents can be filed when filing a new case (Initial Filings)?** The types of documents are limited by the JCIT Technology Standards. Please refer to their guidelines at <http://www.txcourts.gov/rules-forms/rules-standards>
- 8. How will I know when something has been accepted or rejected?** Once a document is accepted or rejected you will get an email notification with an explanation in the notes.
- 9. Why was my filing rejected?** There are numerous reasons for a document to be returned for correction including: Incorrect jurisdiction, incomplete in a signature block, no bar number, signature, email address, etc., documents submitted as attachments that need to be lead documents. Incorrect or incomplete information, formatting, illegible or unreadable, insufficient fees/funds are a few examples.
- 10. If a document has been returned for correction and there is a deadline to get it filed, will the deadline be waived?** NO, statutory deadlines cannot be waived.

**11. How can you tell what should be a lead document?** Any document that you want to have file stamped needs to be filed as a lead document. (This includes cover letters as lead documents)

**12. What documents can be filed as Subsequent Filings?** Any filing after the new case has been submitted and accepted is a subsequent filing. All Orders should be subsequent filings.

**13. How do I obtain copies or certified copies of documents?** You can request them through e-File by filing an document explaining what you want and choosing optional fees. Copies are .50 per page to mail. Certified copies are \$1 per page and must be mailed for the certification to be valid.

**14. Are e-filed documents considered to be the court's original copy?** Any electronically filed document is deemed the original upon acceptance.

**15. I need citations issued and served, what is the best procedure for this?** Please provide a cover letter as a lead document, with your petition as a lead document, detailing your instructions for service. If you want service through certified mail or by the Sheriff's Office you must include copy fees for the pleading(s) to be attached to the issuing document, plus the cost of service that can be found under additional fees.

**16. If a filing is returned for correction will you be charged the credit card convenience fee?** You will need to check with your provider to determine how they handle this.

**17. If a document is e-filed for a court hearing scheduled within 24 hours, will it be available in court for the hearing?** You will need to bring documents with you to court.

**18. What is the cost?** Fees vary. For filing fees please visit our website at [www.co.washington.tx.us](http://www.co.washington.tx.us) For EFSP fees contact your service provider.

**19. Are indigent clients able to use e-file.texas.gov for free?** Yes, there is a waiver option that will waive all fees but there must be a supporting Affidavit and an Order of Indigence must already be on file in the case. If the waiver option is used and you are not qualified to use that option, your filing will be rejected. If you have trouble setting up a waiver account, please call E-File Texas at 1-855-839-3453.

**20. What credit cards are accepted for e-filing?** MasterCard, Visa and Discover

**21. If I do not have an attorney do I still have access to e-File Texas?** Yes, please go to [www.efiletexas.gov](http://www.efiletexas.gov) for more information on how to use e-File.

**22. Who do I call if I am having problems?** Please call E-File Texas Support at 1-855-839-3453.