



In an effort to better prepare filers for EFILETEXAS.gov, we want to share our experiences from CCL & Probate- issues, rejection reasons, etc.

\*\*\*\* It is important to note, unlike in the paper environment, the County Clerk's Office cannot "fix" a filing when input into EFILETEXAS.gov improperly. \*\*\*\*

### **County Courts at Law (reasons for rejection)**

Wrong Jurisdiction

Wrong Case Number (on subsequent filings)

Multiple pleadings filed as one Lead Document

Motions and proposed orders/judgments must be filed separately as a Lead Document

Credit Card Declined

Filer selects efileandService (if we get an error we will have to reject – filer needs to contact service provider)

Fiat must be filed as a Lead Document (must contain the name of pleading to which it is associated)

Documents with sensitive data as defined in T.R.C.P. 21 (C)

Failure to enter complete bar code number, including zeros

**Contact Tarrant County Courts at Law if:** You are not able to find a case in EFILETEXAS.gov – “Unavailable for Filing”, or questions on fees or filing document types

## **Probate (reasons for rejection)**

When filing you will first need to ensure you have selected the correct **Filing Code**, then **upload** your **document that matches the Filing Code**. This will need to be done with each document when you are filing. **A filing will be rejected** if you chose a Filing Code and then **upload all your documents as one image (one image such as your application, copy of Will, and Information sheets.)** Key point to remember, **each document is a Lead Document** and it is required to **select a Filing Code for each document image**.

A **filing will be rejected** if you have **multiple cases filed within a single envelope**. Ensure that each envelope you submit is for just one cause number. However, you may file multiple documents for a case number as long as you select the correct Filing Code and then upload your document that corresponds to your Filing Code selection.

**A filing will be rejected if the image is not a text searchable PDF document.**

### **Process or steps to ensure your E-filing is submitted correctly**

1. Ensure you have **selected the correct County**
2. Ensure you have selected the **correct case type** (Independent, Dependent, **Probate- Other Estate Proceedings, which is Muniment of Title and Heirships**, etc.)
3. Ensure you have selected the correct **Filing Code** and then upload the corresponding document. Next, select **Add Additional Filing**. Then you will **select the corresponding Filing Event Code that best matches your pleading and then upload**. Repeat this process within the same envelope for **additional documents** you may need to e-file.
4. Ensure you have selected the correct fees that may be required for your filing. On Probate's such as **Muniment of Title, there is a \$2 Judge Fee required**. You can prepay this by selecting **Judge Fee (\$2)** which is found within **Optional Services** within your envelope. With **Probate Administrations for Letters**, you may **prepay for four letters and Judge Fee** by selecting it through **Optional Services**.

5. The **Civil Information Sheet** and **Probate Supplemental Information Sheet** are required on **each new case for all case types**. Please ensure you **select the Filing Code for each one** separately and then upload your Information Sheet. Again, you will need to select the **Filing Code first (Civil Information Sheet)** then upload your document. Repeat with the **Probate Supplemental Sheet**.
6. When you need a **Personal Citation issued and served** please select the **Filing Code Citation Request** and then **upload a cover letter with who is being served and their address**. Next, you will need to select **Constable Citation Service Fee (\$75)** under **Optional Services** and **the number of citations you need served**. It is **always required** to also **select under Optional Services the clerk's fee for Issuance of the citation**. You will **select Personal Citation Issuance Fee (\$4)** under **Optional Services**. A pop up window will let you enter the number of Issuance you need.

### Common Questions

**Do you want the scanned copy of the Will merged with the application to probate?**

Answer: No, you will need to select the **Filing Code Will-Copy** and then upload the image.

Please check with the proper court your case is assigned to for policy on filing the Original Will with the Clerk's office.

1. Do you want the scanned copy of the Certificate of Medical Exam attached to an application to appoint a guardian?

**No, for the time being, always select the Filing Code first and then upload your image.**

2. If I have multiple pleadings, can they be in the same envelope when I e-file?

**Yes, but you must ensure that you select a Filing Code for each pleading and then upload your document to it. Repeat within the same envelope as long as it's the same cause number.**

### EFILETEXAS.gov Tip

**If you are looking for a previously filed case by case number and EFILETEXAS.gov can't find it, try searching for it by removing all the dashes from the case number.**

# Tarrant County Clerk FAQs

## **1. When does E-Filing become mandatory in Tarrant County?**

E-Filing will be mandatory effective January 1, 2014.

## **2. Do I have to e-file my cases?**

Yes, there are some very limited exceptions. E-filing is mandated for almost all documents filed by attorneys. Exceptions are listed in the Supreme Court Rules, which are not yet finalized but have been made available for public review and comment. For more detailed information, please visit: [http://www.txcourts.gov/All\\_Archived\\_Documents/SupremeCourt/AdministrativeOrders/miscdocket/13/13912800\(2\).pdf](http://www.txcourts.gov/All_Archived_Documents/SupremeCourt/AdministrativeOrders/miscdocket/13/13912800(2).pdf)

## **3. What types of cases are designated for electronic filing?**

All **civil** cases are designated for electronic filing. Again, there are some exceptions.

## **4. What are the benefits and features of E-Filing?**

There are a number of significant benefits and features:

Attorneys can file documents 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Full case information is available immediately to attorneys, parties, and the general public through the Internet. For attorneys, *this will eventually include the ability to view the images of filed documents.*

Attorneys on the system will receive email notices electronically in CM/ECF cases. This greatly speeds delivery and eliminates the costs to both the clerk and attorneys of handling and mailing paper notices.

Multiple parties can view the same case files simultaneously.

Since CM/ECF (Case Management/Electronic Case Files) uses Internet standard software, the out-of-pocket cost of participation for attorneys is typically very low.

**5. Will I be able to file documents the day of a hearing in the Clerk's Office?**

You may, but preferably not. When this cannot be avoided, you will be able to use a county clerk kiosk located in the Central Library, Room B30. Your documents must be on a flash drive and in Adobe PDF searchable format. Scanners will **not** be available. Attorneys should continue to follow the current procedure of alerting the clerk of the filing and the impending hearing.

**6. Do I have to use an Electronic Filing Service Provider (EFSP)?**

Yes, and you may file directly through EFILETEXAS.gov. There are other EFSP vendor options and one of the others may offer additional services which might be of interest to you. Please visit the OCA's website at: <http://www.txcourts.gov/jcit/efiling/efilinghome.asp> to get a list of participating EFSPs, including their contact information.

**7. What if I am filing a case with an Affidavit of Indigency, or I have been court appointed to represent a litigant, how are the fees handled?**

8.

You will have a "waiver" option for those instances where you are not required to make a payment. (Please check with your EFSP provider to verify they provide the "waiver" option.)

**8. May I include more than one document for filing per submission?**

Yes. EFILETEXAS.gov will allow multiple documents with the SAME cause number to be filed in one submission.

**9. What format does my document have to be in?**

An e-filed document must be in text-searchable PDF, using fonts specified in the Adobe PDF reference version 1.5, on 8.5x11 page size, with the content appropriately rotated.

**10. How do I e-file a Proposed Order?**

Proposed orders should be submitted as a *supporting document* with the same filing transaction as the respective motion whenever possible. The e-filing system will not separate documents that are scanned together as one document. Filing a proposed order incorrectly may cause the document to be rejected. If this occurs, you may have to resubmit the proposed order.

Note: If you are only submitting a proposed order, be sure to include a cover letter as your main document with the proposed order attached to ensure that the proposed order does not receive a file mark.

**11. My document has two cause numbers listed, do I need to submit the document twice?**

Yes. Once for each cause number listed on the document. Please note that we strongly discourage attorneys from putting multiple cause numbers on one document.

**12. Will I need to pay for service copies of pleadings when I file a document that request service?**

Yes, you will also need to indicate in the comments whether the issuance will be picked up by the attorney's office, a private process server or will need to be mailed back by the clerk's office.

**13. What if I am solo practitioner or small law firm and cannot afford to invest in the purchase of Adobe Pro software in order to convert my Word documents into a searchable pdf for e-filing?**

There are a number of EFSPs that offer options for converting your documents into a searchable pdf. Please check with the various EFSPs about available options.

**14. How do I register with EFILETEXAS.gov?**

An electronic filing service provider (EFSP) provides an online service to help you file your documents, and acts as the intermediary between you and the EFILETEXAS.gov system. You can select any EFSP that has met certification requirements of the Office of Court Administration. Each EFSP offers a variety of additional services and you should evaluate which EFSP meets your filing needs.

Additionally, if you are familiar with e-filing on the Texas.gov system and have chosen an EFSP, you may continue to use that same EFSP with EFILETEXAS.gov.

Tyler Technologies was selected by the State of Texas to provide the E-filing platform known as **EFILETEXAS.gov**. Visit [www.EFILETEXAS.gov.com](http://www.EFILETEXAS.gov.com) for information on the program.

You can read the Supreme Court mandate at:

[http://www.txcourts.gov/All\\_Archived\\_Documents/SupremeCourt/AdministrativeOrders/miscdocket/13/13912800\(2\).pdf](http://www.txcourts.gov/All_Archived_Documents/SupremeCourt/AdministrativeOrders/miscdocket/13/13912800(2).pdf).

Video of an E-Filing presentation, courtesy of the Tarrant County Bar Association.

<http://video.tarrantbar.org/Civil-EFile-Video.aspx>