

## **Johnson County Civil, Family, and Probate e-Filing Requirements**

The Texas Supreme Court has mandated that all civil and probate cases must be filed electronically (e-file) effective January 1, 2015. In an effort to prepare for this new process, Johnson County began accepting e-filings for civil and probate cases on May 19, 2014, in advance of the mandate. In addition to providing early e-filing capability, the County Clerk has established requirements to support the e-filing process that coincide with the Supreme Court rules.

### **Document Requirements**

- 1) Documents must be in a text-searchable PDF format using 300 DPI resolution and fonts specified in the Adobe PDF reference version 1.5 and should be generated directly from the originating software using a PDF distiller whenever possible.
- 2) Paper must be white with a page size of 8.5 x 11; content must be appropriately rotated. There must be a minimum of a one inch margin on top, bottom, and sides of page.
- 3) Spacing: Text must be double-spaced; footnotes, block quotations, short lists and issues or points of error may be single spaced. Typeface: A Document produced on a computer must be printed in conventional typeface of 14 point except for footnotes which must be 12 point.
- 4) Scanner setting must be black and white. Color or grayscale images will be accepted for photographs only.
- 5) Documents must contain filer's complete contact information in the signature block including name, address, phone number and email address.
- 6) Documents may not contain any security or feature restrictions including password protection or encryption and may not contain embedded multi-media video, audio or programming.
- 7) Documents must not contain any malware or viruses. The e-filing of a document constitutes certification by the e-filer that the document has been checked and is clear of any malware or viruses.
- 8) A fiat must be filed as a separate Notice of Hearing and cannot be part of the pleading. It must contain the name of the pleading to which it is associated. *For example, Notice of Hearing on Motion for Continuance.* It can be filed with the pleading as an attachment.
- 9) Documents may not contain multiple filings; each filing must be filed separately. *For example, you cannot file a combined Answer and Counterpetition, you must file 1 Answer and 1 Counterpetition.*
- 10) PDF packages and/or portfolios are not permitted. Multiple documents which pertain to a single filing must be combined into a single PDF. Bookmarks must be used to separate content appropriately. *For example, exhibits to pleadings are included in a single PDF but they must be bookmarked by exhibit.* Otherwise exhibits may be filed as attachments.
- 11) Documents must contain complete page numbering for the entire filing. When including one or more appendices to a filing, either 1) number appendices individually and then number the entire document as a whole, or 2) number the entire document as a whole including appendices.

- 12) The document filename must contain only alphanumeric characters. No special characters are allowed. The length of the filename should be restricted to 50 characters.
- 13) No document may be filed that contains sensitive data as defined in T.R.C.P. 21(c).

### **eFileTexas Requirements**

Information entered in the eFileTexas portal's text boxes is imported into the case management database; therefore, certain requirements have also been established for the eFileTexas portal.

- Texas boxes within eFileTexas must be completed in proper case. *For example, you may not enter the required information in all caps or in all lower caps.*
- Use "Filing Description" field within eFileTexas for typing continuation of document title.

### **Reasons for Returning a Filing for Correction**

To ensure your documents are accepted when submitted through the e-file portal, we recommend you review this list for reasons a document may be returned.

- **Insufficient Fees-** Fees submitted are insufficient. Please resubmit your filing with the correct case type/filing type.
- **Insufficient Funds-** Credit Card was declined. Please resubmit with a valid method of payment.
- **Document Addressed to Wrong Clerk-** The document is addressed to a court for which this clerk's office does not accept filings. Please correct or re-file with the appropriate clerk's office.
- **Incorrect/Incomplete Information-** Please resubmit using the correct:
  - Cause number
  - Case Type
  - Case Category
  - Filing Code
  - Party Names on document(s)
- **Incorrect Formatting-** Please resubmit the document
  - By rotating the document so that the file mark will appear in the upper right corner
  - In text searchable PDF
  - Directly converted to PDF if possible
  - With a 300dpi resolution
  - With a page size of 8.5"x11"
  - With no embedded fonts
- **PDF Documents Combined-** You have submitted multiple documents for filing in a single PDF. The file-mark will only appear on the documents submitted as lead documents. Please file all lead documents as separate PDF documents.
- **Illegible/Unreadable-** Please resubmit in a format that is legible.
- **Sensitive Data-** Please resubmit in five (5) business days with all sensitive data redacted:

- DL, SSN, Passport Number, Tax ID Number, Government Issued ID Number
- Bank Account Number, Credit Card Number, Financial Account Number
- Birth Date, Home Address and name of any person who was a minor when the suit was filed.

Should you have any questions regarding these established requirements, you may contact one of the following clerks:

For Civil/Family Law cases:      Kristie Walker x1309  
   Carly Casey x1308  
   Amy Abbott

For Probate/Guardianship cases:      Stefani McCann x1300  
   Jeanne Barham x1311  
   Deborah Allison x1310

Supervisors:      Juliana Vara x1314  
                                 Karen Alexander x1302

## Jurisdictional Questions

### General Info

County Name: **JOHNSON COUNTY**

Office Type: **County Clerk**

EFSP Contact (Person that EFSP can call to ask court questions)

Name: **Karen Alexander or Juliana Vara**

Phone: **(817)556-6323 x 1302 (817)556-6323 x 1314**

Is Amex accepted? **No** Is your CMS integrated? **Not at this time but expect to be in a few months.**

Are attachments allowed? **YES**

If so, do you want them as separate attachments, or combined into a single document?

**Separate Attachments**

Are multiple lead documents allowed in one filing? **Yes – but proposed orders and notice of hearings should always be filed as an attachment**

### Initial Filings

Should Case Info Sheet be submitted as an attachment to the petition or as a separate filing? **Attachment**

Should any exhibits be submitted as attachments to petition or as separate filing? **Attachment**

Are citation requests, copies, etc., under Optional services or as a Filing Code for a separate filing? **Optional Services**

If Citation Request form is required, from where can it be downloaded? **N/A (This may change in the future)**

When requesting citations, etc. do you allow filer to request copies (optional services) to attach to the citation? **Yes**

Do you require plaintiff or defendant addresses? **Yes**

When doing an original petition filing, should all parties be listed or just first plaintiff /first defendant? **All**

Do you want all exhibits uploaded as separate documents or merged into one document? **Merged into one if bookmarked. Otherwise filed as attachments.**

## **Subsequent Filings**

Do Notices, Orders, etc., that should not be file stamped have to have a cover letter as the lead document? **Yes**

Do you accept non-indexed case filings? **Yes**

What process should be used for e-filing proposed orders? **Upload as attachment. We will be presented to the court. If a hearing is required the filer should contact the court coordinator for the proper court once they receive confirmation that we have accepted the filing in order to get the hearing set.**

What process should be used for e-filing motions? **They should be lead documents. If a hearing is required the filer should contact the court coordinator for the proper court once they have received confirmation that we have accepted the filing in order to get the hearing set.**

What process should be used for e-filing exhibits? **Upload as attachment unless part of a bookmarked document.**

## **e-filing Frequently Asked Questions**

- 1) How do I pick a multiplier to request citations, notices and writs?  
*Under Optional Services in Filings Page.*
- 2) How can I e-file Exhibits if my Adobe is not capable to bookmark?  
*File them as attachments to the Lead Document.*
- 3) How many numbers need to be redacted for sensitive data?  
*All numbers but the last 3 or 4 digits.*
- 4) What if I do not want to upgrade my Adobe to be able to bookmark.  
*File the exhibits as attachments to the Lead Document.*
- 5) Why does my bank/credit card place a hold on my funds when e-filings are returned for corrections?  
*Similar to online purchases, your bank or credit card will be encumbered for any fees at the time of filing. Since each institution has different business processes, contact your bank or credit card company.*
- 6) What filing code do I pick?  
*If you are unable to determine which code to use, you may contact us at 817-556-6323 x1306 for Assistance.*
- 7) Why do the names and titles of documents need to be typed in Proper Case rather than all caps?  
*The Management Database is designed to display all data in proper case. In order to remain consistent with entries, your e-filing must be entered in proper case.*
- 8) What documents need to be separated?  
*All documents that require a file mark at the time of filing should be Lead Documents (Applications, Motions, Answers, etc.). Proposed Orders, exhibits, Notice of Hearings, etc. should be attachments.*
- 9) What if I try to e-file into an existing case but I get a message that the case does not exist?  
*You are getting that message because even though it is an existing case there has never been anything e-filed for that case. Just choose new case and continue as if you are filing a new case. If any initiation fees are added, once you have completed the e-file process and selected the proper Filing Code and Optional Services those fees should disappear and the correct fees added. If you have any problems give us a call and we will try to walk you through the process.*