



FILED
LORAIN COUNTY

LORAIN COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS 2/18
LORAIN COUNTY, OHIO

COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2023

RAYMOND J. EWERS, ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE

IN RE:) CASE NO. MISC 2025
)
ELECTRONIC FILINGS) **ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER**

To promote the orderly management of cases and the efficient administration of justice in all cases filed with the General Division of the Lorain County Common Pleas Court, the Court hereby adopts this Administrative Order, which shall be a standing order applicable to all cases filed in the General Division of the Court.

I. Scope of Administrative Order

This Order shall be effective on the “go live” date of **December 8, 2025** and shall remain in full force and effect until further order of the Court.

If necessary, the Court may issue additional administrative orders or adopt local rules that supplement this Order or change the mandatory requirements of e-filing.

II. Definitions

- A. **Case Type:** A case type that has been designated by Administrative Order or Local Rule as being an e-File case.
- B. **Clerk Review:** A preliminary review of submitted documents by the Clerk in accordance with Court rules, policies, procedures, and practice. The Clerk may review the data and documents electronically submitted to ensure compliance with Court rules, policies, procedures, and practices before accepting the document which includes creating a docket entry or before docketing the case. If the submitted documents comply with the applicable Court rules, policies, and procedures, the documents will be accepted by the Clerk for e-Filing. If the submitted documents do not comply then they will not be accepted for e-Filing, and the Clerk shall notify the filer of the deficiency or problem with the submission. If the deficiency is not corrected within 2 business days, the document will be rejected.





- C. **Case Management System (CMS):** The Court CMS manages the receipt, processing, storage, and retrieval of data associated with a case and performs actions on the data.
- D. **Confidentiality or Confidential:** All documents submitted for e-Filing shall not be considered a public record until accepted by the Clerk and shall remain confidential thereafter if so entitled to confidentiality under rule or law.
- E. **Court Electronic Record:** Any document that the Court receives in electronic form, records in the CMS and stores in its Document Management System (DMS). This includes Court initiated filings as well as pleadings, other documents, and attachments created by parties or their counsel. It does not include physical exhibits brought into the courtroom for the Court or jury's edification that cannot be captured in electronic form.
- F. **Court Initiated Filings:** Official Court documents entered into the docket or register of actions, such as notices or orders. The term "Court initiated filings" is a simplification to indicate that documents will be submitted as part of the electronic court record, but could be submitted using exactly the same process as external filings if the Court so desires.
- G. **Documents:** A filing made with the Clerk in either electronic format or paper form, becoming the Court's official record.
- H. **Document Management System (DMS):** A DMS manages the receipting, indexing, storage, and retrieval of electronic and non-electronic documents associated with a case.
- I. **Electronic Filing (e-Filing):** The electronic transmission, acceptance, and processing of a filing. A submission consists of data, one or more documents, and images. This definition of e-File does not apply to facsimile or email.
- J. **Electronic Service (e-Service):** The electronic transmission, acceptance, and processing of a filing. A submission consists of data, one or more documents, and images. This definition of e-Service does not apply to facsimile or email.
- K. **Electronic Signature (e-Signature):** An electronic sound, symbol, or process that is attached to, or logically associated with, an electronic record and executed or adopted by a person with the intent to sign the electronic record. An e-Signature may be designated with a "/s/ (name)."
- L. **Registered User:** A person who has read and agreed to the terms of the e-Filing System's User Agreement, has provided his/her credentials through the e-Filing system proving his/her identity, and has been provided with a user name and





password through the e-Filing system. A Registered User, by virtue of his/her registration with the e-Filing System, expressly assents to service by email as the default method of service for all documents except Complaints.

- M. **Rejected Filing:** A document that does not comply with the applicable Court rules, policies, or procedures and does not meet the requirements of Clerk Review.
- N. **Remote Access:** The ability of any person to electronically search, inspect, and copy a court record at a location other than the place where the record is made available.

III. E-Filing Generally

- A. Pursuant to the “go-live” date above, all attorneys shall use the Court’s e-Filing System. Counsel of record and Self-Represented litigants are required to register with the e-File System to file, serve, receive, review, and retrieve copies of all case documents, including orders, notices, pleadings, or other documents submitted in designated e-File case types.
- B. If a party or counsel of record does not have internet access, the party or counsel of record may use the Clerk’s Public Access Terminal to register to use the Court’s e-File system and to e-File documents.
- C. Any document filed electronically that requires a filing fee may be rejected by the Clerk unless the filer has paid or requested a waiver of the filing fee in accordance with Subsection XIII.
- D. Fax filings will no longer be accepted by the Clerk of Courts.

IV. Registration in e-File System

- A. All counsel filing documents in case types designated as mandatory e-File case types shall be registered users in the e-Filing System. All counsel of record shall register with the Court’s e-File system to file, serve, receive, review, and retrieve copies of e-Filed pleadings, orders, and documents in the case.
- B. If a party or counsel of record does not have internet access, the party or counsel of record may use the Clerk’s Public Access Terminal to register to use the Court’s e-File system and to e-File documents.





V. Confidential and Unique Electronic Identifier

- A. The Court's e-File system shall assign an individual who has registered pursuant to Subsection IV, a confidential and unique electronic identifier that shall be used to file, serve, receive, review, and retrieve e-Filed pleadings, orders, and other documents in the case.
- B. Each person to whom a unique identifier has been assigned shall be responsible for the security and use of such identifier.
- C. All e-Filed documents shall be deemed to be made with the authorization of the party who is assigned the specific unique electronic identifier, unless the party proves to the satisfaction of the Court, by clear and convincing evidence, that the contrary is demonstrated.

VI. Form of Documents Electronically Filed

A. Format

1. All electronically filed documents shall, to the extent practicable, be formatted in accordance with applicable rules governing formatting of paper pleadings and in other formats the Court may require.
2. All e-Filed documents, pleadings, and papers can be filed with the Clerk in PDF format, with the exception of proposed orders/proposed entries. Proposed orders/entries shall be submitted in a format specified by the Court. If there is no format specified by the Court then proposed orders/entries shall be submitted in a Microsoft Word Compatible format. Proposed orders/entries shall reference the specific motion to which it applies.
3. The title or caption of a document entered into the e-filing system shall match the title or caption noted on the document itself.
4. A filed document shall not contain links to other documents or references to the CMS, unless they are incorporated into the filed documents. External links are prohibited.

B. **Size of Filing.** E-filed document size is limited to 70 megabytes (70 MB). Documents that exceed 70 MB must be filed in paper form with the Clerk of Courts. Only one document is permitted to be filed per e-filing. Multiple Exhibits or appendices are not considered separate documents under this rule.





C. Signatures

1. **Attorney/Filer's signature:** E-Filed documents that require the signature of the attorney or filing party shall be signed with a conformed signature of “/s/ [name].” The correct format for an attorney’s conformed signature is as follows:

/s/Attorney Name
Attorney Name
Bar Number 1234567
Attorney for [Plaintiff/Defendant] XYZ Corporation
ABC Law Firm
Address
Telephone
E-mail address

The conformed signature on an e-Filed document is deemed to constitute a signature on the document for the purposes of signature requirements imposed by the Ohio Rules of Superintendence, Rules of Civil Procedure, Rules of Criminal Procedure, and any other law.

2. **Multiple Signatures:** When a stipulation or other document requires two or more signatures, the filer shall:
 - (a) Confirm that the content of the document is acceptable to all persons required to sign the document;
 - (b) Indicate the agreement of other counsel or parties at the appropriate place in the document, usually on the signature line; and
 - (c) E-File the document, indicating the signatories, e.g., /s/ Jane Doe, /s/ John Smith, etc.
3. **Original Signatures:** Documents requiring an original signature, such as an affidavit or other notarized documents shall be e-Filed in a .pdf format.
 - (a) The filer shall maintain the signed document in the filer’s records and have it available for production upon request of the Court.
 - (b) The signed document shall be maintained until the case is closed and the time for appeal has expired or the appeals have been heard or denied and all opportunities for post judgment relief are exhausted. It is the filer’s responsibility to maintain the document.





4. **Judge, Magistrate, or Judicial Officer Signature.** Electronic documents may be signed by a Judge, Magistrate, or judicial officer via a secure process in the CMS. The e-signatures will be represented as a digitized image of the official's handwritten signature and shall have the same force and effect as if the official had affixed a signature to a paper copy of the document.

VII. Documents Originating in Paper Form

Any document filed in paper form for a case shall be scanned by the Clerk of Courts and uploaded to the Court Electronic Record. The uploaded electronic version of the case document shall constitute the original document.

VIII. Official Court Record

For documents that have been e-Filed pursuant to this Order or documents filed in paper format pursuant to this Order that have been scanned and uploaded to the e-File system by the Clerk, the electronic version constitutes the Official Court Record. Any document offered in paper form that has been subsequently uploaded and been made a part of the Court Electronic Record is not required to be retained by the Clerk of Court. E-Filed Documents have the same force and effect as those filed by traditional means.

IX. Time, Effect, and Process of e-Filing

- A. **E-filing System.** The e-Filing System is hereby appointed the agent of the Clerk of Courts for purposes of electronic filing, receipt, service, and retrieval of electronic documents. Any document submitted electronically to the Court will not be considered filed until accepted at Clerk Review.
 1. Nothing in this Order alters the provision of Civil Rule 6 that filing deadlines on a Saturday, Sunday, or a legal holiday will run to the end of the following day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday.
 2. The Clerk will review filings by date and time submitted for each case type, with the exception of ex parte filings or filings that must be processed the same day of filing by statute or procedure.
- B. **Submission.** With the exception of ex parte Civil Stalking Protection Orders (CSPO), any filing may be e-Filed with the Clerk 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Ex parte Petitions for Civil Stalking Protection Orders may only be filed in person during the Court's regular business hours.





- C. **Receipt of Submission.** Upon receipt, the Court's e-File system shall issue a confirmation that the submission has been received. The confirmation shall include the date and time of receipt and serve as proof of receipt.
- D. **Clerk Review.** After Clerk Review, a filer will receive notification from the Clerk that the submission has been accepted or rejected by the Clerk.
 - 1. If the submission is accepted, the document shall be docketed and filed.
 - 2. If the submission is rejected, the document shall not become part of the Court record and the filer shall be required to re-submit the document, correcting any errors denoted in the e-filing portal.
 - 3. When a document is re-submitted after the filer has corrected any errors, the resubmission date will be the new filing date.
 - 4. If any party or attorney disputes the rejection and new filing date, refer to subsection XIV (B).
- E. **Official Time Stamp:** Upon acceptance, the submission shall be deemed filed and shall receive an electronic stamp that includes the date and time that the filer submitted the document to the Court's e-File system. The date and time the filing was submitted shall be the official time-stamp of the document. Once accepted, the document will be deemed filed for purposes of Ohio Law and relevant Rules of Court Procedure. Filings submitted on Saturday, Sunday, or other legal holiday will not be reviewed until the next business day. It is the responsibility of the party or attorney to ensure all time calculations are done in accordance with all governing rules of procedure.
- F. **System Errors:** If a submission is not received by the Court because of a System Error, the Court may, upon satisfactory proof, enter an order permitting the document to be filed *nunc pro tunc* to the date it was submitted.

X. Service

Subject to the exceptions listed in this subsection, it shall be the responsibility of the filing party to serve all filings on all other parties in an e-File case. The filing party shall make service upon all other registered users of the e-Filing System electronically via the Court's authorized e-Filing System. Parties, or their designated counsel, shall receive all documents electronically filed and electronically served upon them via access to the e-Filing System. No confirmation of receipt will be sent to the filing party, so it is the





responsibility of the filing party to ensure the correct parties are served at the correct electronic addresses.

A. Instructions for Service. For all documents that require service by the Clerk or documents for which a party is requesting that service be made by the Clerk, Instructions for Service shall be included. The Clerk shall not accept Instructions for Service that do not designate the names and addresses of the parties to be served and method to be served. If the address of the party to be served is unknown, the filer shall substitute "unknown."

B. Service of Original Complaint and Related Documents

1. Upon filing the original complaint or any counterclaim, cross-claim, or third-party complaint, in addition to the Instructions for Service required by this Order, the filer shall include the address of the plaintiff(s) and defendant(s) in the caption of the document. If the address of any plaintiff or defendant is unknown, the filer shall substitute "unknown" for the address in the caption.
2. Unless an attorney or party has obtained permission signed by the assigned Judge to defer service of summons for a specific period of time, the Instructions for Service filed with the original complaint or any counterclaim, cross-claim, or third-party complaint shall indicate a method of service pursuant to Civ. R. 4, *et seq.* The Clerk shall issue a summons and process the method of service in accordance with the Ohio Rules of Civil Procedure and the Ohio Rules of Juvenile Procedure when applicable.
3. E-Service shall not replace the methods of service of pleadings prescribed in the applicable Rules of Procedure.

C. Documents Filed Subsequent to Complaint

1. The filer, not the Clerk, shall be responsible for serving all documents filed subsequent to the original complaint on all parties or their attorneys. Proof of service of all documents required or permitted to be served shall be made in compliance with Civ. R. 5(B)(2).
2. A party who is not a registered user of the e-Filing System is entitled to a paper copy of an electronically filed document. **The filing party shall serve the non-registered party with the document in accordance with the applicable rules of the Court.** Upon notification that a document has been accepted for e-filing, the filing party shall print out a copy of the e-





File document and mail it to the non-registered user at the user's last known address.

3. After the order or entry has been signed and filed, the Court or Clerk shall serve copies of all entries and orders through the e-Filing System unless service is indicated to be completed in another manner.
4. When a document is filed in accordance with these procedures, the e-Filing System will generate a "Notice of Electronic Filing," to the filing party and any other party who is a registered user of the e-Filing System. If the recipient is a registered user, the "Notice of Electronic Filing" delivered to the user's e-Filing account shall constitute service of that document upon that party in accordance with the applicable rules of the Court.

XI. Personal and Private Information in Documents with the Clerk

- A. **Definition.** Personal and private information includes, but is not limited to, social security numbers, financial account numbers, names of minors, information protected by law from public disclosure, or other personal identifiers.
- B. **Exclusion.** The filer shall not include personal and private information in any document filed with the Court unless such inclusion is necessary and relevant to the case or unless it is filed as a separate document – such as the Personal Identifier Information Sheet, which is a secure document not subject to public record. This requirement extends to and includes exhibits or addenda attached to filings.
- C. **Redaction.** If personal and private information is necessary and must be included in a document, the filer shall redact the personal and private information from the document in the following manner:
 1. For social security numbers, financial account numbers, or other personal identification numbers, all but the last four digits of the number shall be redacted.
 2. For minors, only the child's initials shall be included.
 3. For any other personal or private information, the information shall be replaced with "[REDACTED]".





- D. **Responsible Party:** The filer is responsible and liable for redacting personal and private information. It is not the responsibility of the Clerk to review each document for compliance with this Order.
- E. **Entries and Orders:** Personal and private information required to be included in entries and orders shall be redacted in the manner set forth in this subsection.

XII. Exceptions to E-File

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the following types of documents shall be filed conventionally, unless expressly required to be filed electronically by the Court:

- A. **Documents Under Seal.** A party shall file a document to be sealed only after an order sealing that document has been signed and journalized. The sealed documents will not be e-Filed but physically present to the Clerk's Office along with a copy of the signed order.
- B. **Documents to be presented to the Court for an in-camera review.** Any document submitted for an in-camera inspection shall be submitted to the assigned Judge or Magistrate outside of the E-Filing system.
- C. **Exhibits and Transcripts.** Any exhibit, transcript, or other documents that may not be comprehensibly viewed in PDF format shall be submitted in their physical form with the Court.
- D. **Civil Stalking Protection Orders.** Neither attorneys nor self-represented litigants can e-File remotely the Petition for a Civil Stalking Protection Order.
- E. **Subpoenas which are to be issued by the Clerk.**
- F. **Documents initiating an appeal in the Ninth District Court of Appeals.** Notices of appeal, docketing statements, or other contemporaneous pleadings to initiate an appeal shall not be e-filed.

XIII. Collection of Filing Deposit and Fees

Any document requiring payment of a filing deposit or fee to the Clerk in order to achieve valid filing status shall be filed in the same manner as any other e-Filed document. The e-File system accepts payment of deposits and fees electronically.

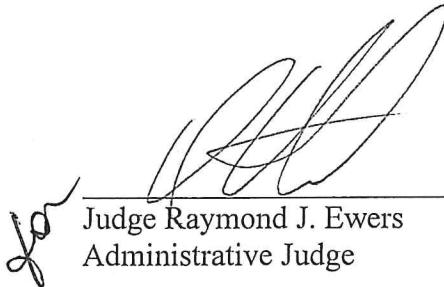




XIV. User Filing Errors and Technical Failures

- A. A filer cannot make changes to a document once it has been submitted for e-Filing. If the Clerk determines during review that the document was submitted in error, it may reject the filing. If after the document offered in error has been accepted for filing after Clerk Review, the document may only be stricken from the Court Electronic Record by the Court.
- B. Technical failures or system outages of the e-filing system or the CMS will be posted on the Court's website, if possible. If a document offered electronically for filing is not filed because of an error in the transmission of the document to the e-filing system, the Court may, upon satisfactory proof from the filer, enter an order permitting the document to be deemed filed as of the date and time it was electronically submitted. **Filers should not, however, assume that such relief will be available on jurisdictional time limits, such as deadlines for appeal or statutes of limitation.**
- C. Documents may be filed in paper form with the Clerk during any technical failure or system outage.

It is so ordered.



Judge Raymond J. Ewers
Administrative Judge

