

SUPREME COURT OF VERMONT
OFFICE OF THE COURT ADMINISTRATOR

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TO: Members of the Vermont Bar
FROM: Patricia Gabel, Esq., State Court Administrator
RE: Important Odyssey File & Serve and Public Portal Updates
DATE: November 17, 2020

Please find the following important Odyssey File & Serve and Public Portal updates below:

- *Deleting Service Contacts for NonFirm Contacts in Odyssey File & Serve*
- *Preparing PDFs prior to eFiling through Odyssey File & Serve*
- *Bar number required for Odyssey File & Serve registration*
- *Obtaining copies of documents in courts that have transitioned to Odyssey*
- *Hearing start times not accurate in Public Portal Case Summaries*
- *Reminder that eCabinet registration still required*
- *New Environmental Division Odyssey File & Serve user guide available*
- *Procedure for emergency filings*
- *Marking exhibits*

I. Deleting Service Contacts for Outside Contacts in Odyssey File & Serve

All Odyssey File & Serve firm administrators must amend the firm's service contacts by deleting contacts for service recipients outside of their firm or organization. Under current procedures, filers and filing organizations must maintain firm service contacts only for members of their own organization. Any existing service contacts for external recipients outside that organization must be deleted immediately to reduce or eliminate duplicate listings in the Public Service Contacts list.

Follow the steps below to delete service contacts associated with your firm:

1. From the **Actions** drop-down list on the *Filer Dashboard* page, select **Firm Service Contacts**.
2. Locate the service contact that you want to delete.
3. From the **Actions** drop-down list for the specified service contact, select **Delete Contact**.
4. Click **Delete** to delete the contact. Once you delete the service contact, it is removed from the Firm Service Contacts list and from any filings to which it was attached.

II. Preparing PDFs prior to efilng through Odyssey File & Serve

To eFile a form-fillable PDF, including all of the court forms on the judiciary website, you must first save them as a flat file. Otherwise, the filing will fail, and you will need to refile.

Follow the steps below to "flatten" a completed PDF fillable form:

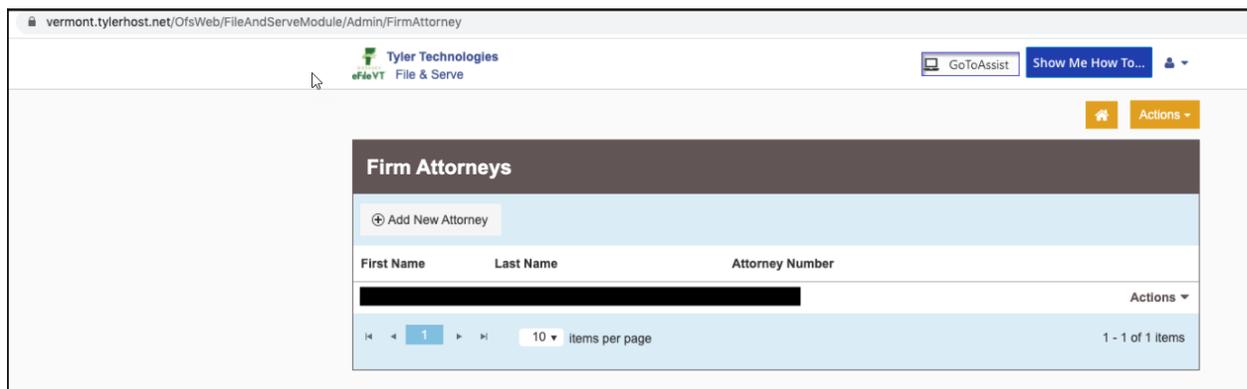
1. Open fillable form.
2. Add appropriate data.
3. Right click on document and select Print. NOTE: if document opens in Adobe, Select File and select Print.
4. Select the PDF printer. (The Adobe PDF printer is installed automatically with Adobe Acrobat. Numerous free PDF printer drivers are available for download from the Internet.)
5. Select OK.
6. Specify location to save the printed, "flattened" version of the form.
7. Select Save

III. Bar number required for Odyssey File & Serve registration

Attorneys must register in Odyssey File and Serve (“OFS”) with their Bar Number, not the ERN number assigned by eCabinet. The Bar Number is labeled Attorney Number in the OFS Registration process.

To find this number after one has already registered:

1. Log into the OFS site
2. Click Actions – top left
3. Select Firm Attorneys
4. Click Name to edit number



IV. Obtaining copies of documents in courts that have transitioned to Odyssey

- a. “Plain” copies: Users with elevated access to their case files in the Public Portal are urged to use their elevated access to the Public Portal to obtain copies of documents online. Elevated access to case files is intended to save time for both court users and court staff. While a user may still request copies of court documents from court staff if necessary, requestors should expect delays in the fulfillment of such requests. Due to the large number of requests for access to court records during the judicial emergency, Supreme Court Administrative Order 49 suspends strict enforcement of the deadlines set forth in the Vermont Rules for Public Access to Court Records.

- b. Certified and exemplified copies: Court users that are required to file through Odyssey File & Serve (OFS) must submit their certified requests and copy fee through OFS. Users requesting certified copies of court records are asked to submit their request identifying with specificity the court record for which a certified copy is being requested. This request can be eFiled into the case containing the requested record using the filing code for a “Copy Request.” The request should also indicate whether electronic certification and delivery is desired, or whether the requestor is seeking a hard copy with a raised seal to be delivered by mail. The requestor should select “Copy-Certified -\$5.00” from the “Optional Services” menu on the filing in order to pay the certification fee through the eFiling system. If multiple certified documents are requested, the correct quantity should be selected for that optional service (\$5.00 per certified document as per 32 V.S.A. § 1751(b)(1)(C)). This fee is waived for government and public agency filers qualified to file with a waiver account, but the optional service must still be selected. Please note: non-agency filers who have previously qualified for an individual waiver of filing fees (f.k.a In Forma Pauperis or IFP) on their case must still pay fees for certified copies, though self-represented litigants are not required to eFile their requests.

These same procedures also apply for Exemplified copies. The fee for exemplified copies is \$10.00 as per 32 V.S.A. § 1751(G).

V. Hearing start times not accurate in Public Portal Case Summaries

Until further notice, users are advised to verify actual start times of individual hearings by (1) opening up and viewing the hearing notice itself (which should be available within case records) and/or (2) checking the hearing start time listed on the court calendar on <https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/court-calendars>.

There is currently a technical issue on the Public Portal that causes some hearing times to display incorrectly on Portal Case Summaries. The time displayed within case records represents the start time of the session block in which the hearing is scheduled, and not the actual start time of the hearing itself. The Judiciary is currently working with Tyler Technologies on addressing and resolving this issue as quickly as possible.

VI. Reminder that eCabinet registration still required

Please note that all instructions pertaining to eCabinet registrations and updates remain in effect.

Administrative Order No. 44 requires attorneys in active status to register up to three email addresses in **eCabinet** for purposes of receiving notices of hearing and other documents. *You may include staff email addresses in the three email addresses that you specify. eCabinet registration is required whether you practice in court or not.*

If you have already registered in **eCabinet**, the email address(es) you provided as part of that process will be used.

If you have not already registered in **eCabinet**, please go to

<https://efiling.eservices.crt.state.vt.us/>, click **Register Now**, and follow the simple prompts. Attorneys will need their attorney license numbers to register. Helpful information about the Attorney Email Registration process is also available on the *Electronic Filing* page of the judiciary website at <https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/about-vermont-judiciary/electronic-access/electronic-filing>. Please contact jud.helpdesk@vermont.gov or call the Helpdesk at 802-828-4357 with any questions in the meantime.

You are also reminded that you are required to update the email address(es) and other contact information you have registered as soon as there are any changes, including changes to staff email addresses you may have included with your registration. To revise the information, please go to <https://efiling.eservices.crt.state.vt.us/>, log into **eCabinet**, click “**Account**,” choose “**My Profile**,” and make the necessary changes to your contact information.

VII. New Environmental Division Odyssey File & Serve user guide available

A new user guide for efilings in the Environmental Division is now available on the judiciary’s website. You can view this and other users guides by going to <https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/about-vermont-judiciary/electronic-access/electronic-filing> and clicking on the header that reads “Odyssey File and Serve User Guides.”

VIII. Procedure for emergency filings

All filers are advised to contact the court to alert staff when submitting an emergency filing through OFS to ensure it gets prompt attention. Although filers may select appropriate emergency filing codes and may note in filing comments that the matter is an emergency, court staff may not always be able to monitor incoming filing queues minute-to-minute, so additional direct notification is recommended for particularly urgent matters.

IX. Marking exhibits

Exhibit stickers are not mandatory as long as they are legibly marked and labeled. If electronic stickers or other electronic markings are used, filers should be sure to flatten the PDF of the exhibit as described above. Not flattening the PDF will cause errors that will delay processing.