

## CASE SECURITY GROUPS AND DOCUMENT SECURITY

### Case Security:

*All cases in Odyssey are assigned a “case security group setting” which controls who may access the case, both internally within Odyssey and externally via the Public Portal. The case security setting is assigned by default on newly created cases in Odyssey as part of the case type configuration. For converted cases from VTADS, the conversion program sets up the appropriate security level. Clerks in Odyssey may also manually change the case security setting as needed on the Detail tab of a case.*

- “Public” is the lowest level case security group. This is generally the setting for Civil and Judicial Bureau cases only. Members of the public may view civil and JB cases via the Portal with no special right of access (although they will only see case data/docket sheets and not actual document images unless they are signed in with a higher level of access).
- “Public Limited” is the case security group assigned to most family, criminal, and probate cases. These cases are public records, but statutes prohibit them from being viewed by members of the general public over the internet if they do not have a specific right of access (i.e. party or counsel on the case, or an agency employee with a special access right). Members of the public may still submit records requests for “public limited” cases and may view these cases from public access terminals in courthouses, but not remotely from home.
- “Confidential” is a case security setting for cases that are not available to members of the public from any location, and for which information should not be disclosed to anyone without a specific right of access. Parties and counsel on the case, and agency employees with specific rights of access may view these cases on the Portal if they have requested and been granted elevated access on their Portal accounts. Some case types are confidential throughout their life, such as Mental Health cases and Probate Wills for Safekeeping. Other cases may have a confidential case security setting only at certain stages of the case, such as criminal cases prior to a finding of probable cause being entered.
- “Juvenile Confidential” is a special case security group used only for juvenile cases (CHINS, Delinquency and Youthful Offender). These cases are not viewable on the Portal by anyone other than attorneys on the case and agency personnel with a specific right of access based on memoranda of understanding (MOU) with the Judiciary (e.g. DCF, OCS, etc). Juvenile case parties (i.e. parents), however, are prohibited from any remote elevated access to juvenile cases because statutes require a judge’s consent for a parent to view a juvenile case file - they must submit a motion and come to the courthouse to view the case record.

- “Sealed” is a highly restricted case security group to be used when cases are sealed. These cases are not viewable to anyone on the Portal, nor are they viewable in Odyssey for clerks or other court employees.

## Document Security:

*Individual case documents are also each assigned a “document security group” setting, which may be different and more restricted than the security setting on the case itself. In other words, in some situations a person may have the right to view a particular case record, but may not have the right to view specific documents on the case. For example, a member of the public may be able to come to a courthouse public access terminal and view a divorce case with “public limited” security, but would not be able to view a financial affidavit submitted on the case with a confidential document security group setting. Setting a document to a higher and more restricted document security than the case itself is most analogous to the old paper-based process of placing the document in the “red folder” that was not shared with the public.*

*However, in the opposite situation, if a case security group is higher and more restricted than the document security, it does NOT mean that members of the public will be able to see that document. In other words, case security trumps document security, so for example, if a case is set to confidential case security but has a document added to it with a public document security setting, it is not a major concern since no one would be able to see that document unless they had access to view the confidential case.*

Document security types are not identical to case security types. They are:

- “Public” – this is the lowest document security setting, viewable by all internal and external viewers with any level of registered access (anonymous non-registered public users cannot view any documents regardless of document security)
- “Public Limited” – this document security group is viewable by case parties and counsel with elevated remote access, and by all viewers at the courthouse public access terminals, as long as the case security is not set to something higher.
- “Confidential” - generally viewable by parties and counsel on the case as well as authorized agency personnel. This document security setting should NOT be used for any documents that should not be viewable by any external viewers whatsoever.
- “Secured Confidential”- this document security is used primarily in the Criminal Division for Criminal History Records. It is viewable by judiciary staff and judges, and to counsel on a case, as well as criminal agency personnel (SAO and DG) but not to case parties themselves (i.e. defendants) regardless of their elevated access level.

- “Internal” – documents with this document security setting are viewable by all judiciary user but not by any external viewers regardless of their level of access. Judge’s hearing notes, for example, could be attached to a case with this document security setting.  
*Please note: any document attached to the case record is potentially discoverable (i.e. it could be subpoenaed) even if set to this internal security setting.*
- “Draft Judge’s Order” – similar to the “internal” document security above, this setting is viewable to judiciary users, but not by any external viewers. When judicial officers generate orders in Odyssey and attach them to cases, they will generally default to this security setting. When clerks docket and send out those orders, they change the security to the appropriate setting based on the order and the case type.