



JUDICIAL BUREAU E-FILING GUIDE

*****Notes:**

- 1) *This document is NOT intended to be a comprehensive guide to use of the Odyssey File & Serve System. See information below regarding user guides, trainings and other materials for filers. This document provides supplemental division-specific guidance for efilings in the Judicial Bureau.*
- 2) *During the initial launch of Vermont's new Odyssey File and Serve efilings program, it is anticipated that this and other user guides will be subject to frequent updates and revisions. It is recommended that users NOT print hard copies of this guide, but refer as needed to the version online, which will be kept current with all updates.*

Accessing Odyssey File & Serve

All Vermont Courts are adopting universal efilings in all dockets through the Odyssey File & Serve (OFS) system, which is a web-based platform accessible from any modern browser on a computer or mobile device.

OFS can be accessed via a link on the Vermont Judiciary's website, or directly at:

<https://vermont.tylerhost.net/ofswb>

Registration

Registration for efilings is free and simple. All that is required is a valid email address. There are different registration options for firm/organizational users and independent users such as self-represented litigants. Instructions on how to register are found in the user guides and other materials in the "self-help" section of the OFS homepage.

Training and Support

On the OFS homepage there is a "self-help" section with numerous resources:

- Live web training sessions and recorded trainings that can be viewed any time
- A Database of FAQs
- Chat and messaging with support personnel
- Training videos
- Downloadable user guides

Note: Odyssey File and Serve is hosted and managed by Tyler Technologies. Court staff have only a limited ability to provide support for questions and issues related to the efilings system.

- I. **Filing into Existing Case - Judicial Bureau efilings is only for subsequent filings after a new case is open.**
 - a. **Location** – Select Judicial Bureau
 - b. **Case Number** – enter the Case Number
 - c. Case Number displays, click Actions

d. Select “File Into Case”

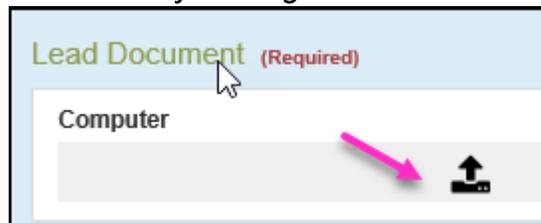
e. **Filings:**

i. Select **Filing Code** in the dropdown – **Note:** *If the filing is post judgement, a fee is due, and filer needs to select the option with a fee or filing may not be accepted.*

ii. **Documents:**

- Documents must be uploaded in PDF Format
- Each document uploaded must have a Security type selected or filer cannot proceed. Judicial Bureau Documents should have a Security type of “Public.”
- Documents containing confidential information such as social security numbers must be labeled as a “confidential document” from the Security dropdown menu by the document, and where required by the new Rules of Electronic Filing¹, a redacted version must also be filed.

1. **Lead Document** – Upload the Answer or Motion or other Filing as the Lead Document by clicking the arrow under Computer



- a. Select document from computer to upload
- b. Click Save Changes if no Attachment to upload

2. **Attachment** – Upload any supporting document to the Lead document

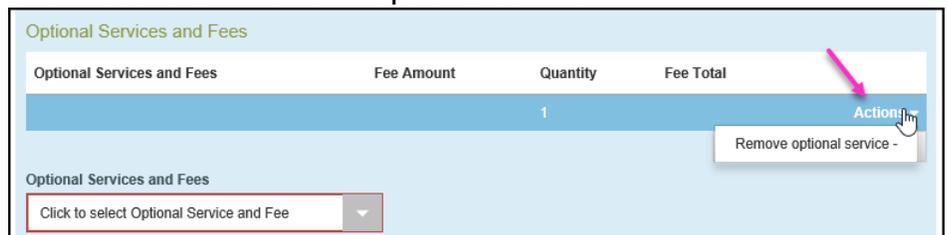
- a. Click Save Changes after uploading Attachment

3. **Add Another Filing** – use this function to add documents separate and apart from the original lead document. Filer must click “Save Changes” then click “Add Another Filing.”

iii. **Answer** – if Filer files an answer admitting or no contest, filer will have to **pay ticket on the portal** found here: <https://publicportal.courts.vt.gov/Portal/>.

iv. **Optional Services and Fees:** *Service to request copies of documents, exemplified copies, certified copies, or public record retrieval. See more in Section VI below.*

1. Click “Add Optional Services and Fees”
2. Select service in drop down
3. If filer accidentally clicks Optional Services and Fees
 - a. Click Actions and Remove Optional Service:



v. Filer must click “Save Changes”

f. **Fees**

¹ VREF 5(b) (5&6); PACR 7(a)(1)

- i. Filer selects payment account
 - 1. If Filer files an Application to Waive Filing Fees, filer will need to create a Waiver Account to use for the filing fee, which will waive all filing fees.
- ii. Filer selects person responsible for fees, which is the person filing
- iii. Filing Attorney – will populate when using Attorney Account
- iv. Click “Save Changes”
- v. *Service and Convenience Fees*: There will be a service and convenience fee added to the total due.

g. **Submission Agreements**

- i. Filer must Certify that filer is in compliance with the Rules for Public Access to Court Records by checking the box
 - ii. Click Summary
- h. A summary of the Envelope displays, Filer must click “Submit”

II. Post Judgment Motions

- a. Most motions filed after judgment or disposition generally require a filing fee.
- b. If filing a post judgment motion, select the existing motion with a post-judgment fee or if there is not a listed motion, select Motion Miscellaneous with \$45.00 fee.

III. Agency Filers

Government Agency Filers and other entities who are exempt by rule or statute from paying any court filing fees will continue to be exempt from paying fees when filing in OFS. Such filers should set up a “waiver” payment account when registering and use this for filings made in the course of their official job duties.

IV. Waiver of Filing Fees (*formerly known as “In Forma Pauperis” Process*)

To request a waiver of filing fees when submitting either a new or a subsequent case filing through OFS, select “waiver” as the payment method (the filer must have a waiver account set up as a payment method – this can be done in the filer’s OFS account settings).

You must include a completed Application to Waive Filing Fees (form # 228, available on www.vermontjudiciary.org) in PDF format.

Do not upload the form as an attachment to your lead document; rather, after uploading your other documents, click on “Add another Filing”  then use the filing code “Application to Waive Filing and Service Fees.”

Cases will be accepted by the court through OFS regardless of whether the filer qualifies for a waiver or not. Review is completed by court staff after the initial acceptance from the e-filing system. If the request to waive fees is denied, or if the filer fails to submit the application form, they will receive notice from the court instructing them on how much is due and the date by which it must be paid to avoid dismissal of the filing.

V. Appeals

- a. When filing an Appeal of a Judicial Bureau case, file the Notice of Appeal in the existing Judicial Bureau case and pay the filing fee to the Judicial Bureau.

VI. Requesting Copies, Public Record Retrieval and other Optional Services

Regular photocopies, certified copies and exemplified copies of court documents may be requested in the “optional services” section when submitting a filing.

IMPORTANT: when selecting any of these services, please also upload document (the format does not specifically matter, and the filing code of “Document(s)” can be used) clearly stating the request including the specific documents for which you want printed copies, and whether you need a regular, certified or exemplified copy. There are different fees for each so be sure to select the correct option.

Photocopies: Regular printed copies of court documents cost 25 cents/page and there is a \$1.00 minimum for any copies, so if the document is 1-4 pages long the cost will be \$1.00 (select the option for “photocopies 1-4”).

Printed copies of documents longer than 4 pages will be [# of pages X 25 cents] (select the option for “photocopies 5+” and enter the total # of pages of the document(s)).

Please also indicate clearly on your filed request document whether you want the documents mailed to you (if so, specify address), or whether you wish to be notified when the copies are available for pickup (if so, specify notification method).

Certified Documents: Documents may be certified electronically and delivered to you via email if electronic certification is suitable for your purposes. Please specify if you would like that option (likely shorter turnaround time) or need a hard copy with a raised/embossed seal (may be required for some foreign jurisdictions).

VII. Refiling after Rejection

- a. When a filing is rejected:
 - i. Filer will receive an email with the rejection reason and any comment the court may add
 - ii. Filer can see the envelope on the Dashboard of Filer’s Account
 1. Click Returned Filings
 2. Find rejected envelope
 3. Click Actions
 4. View Envelope Details
- a. Click to Expand Filings Section
- b. If filing was rejected, filer has 7 days to refile with a correct document in order to retain the original filing date.
- c. Process to follow:
 - i. Go to Filings Tab

- ii. On the rejected filing, to far right, click 4th button “Copy this envelope”



VIII. Support and Troubleshooting

- a. Case and docket-specific questions:

Examples include which forms to file for a particular case type, or to check the status of a submitted filing please contact court staff or consult information available at <https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/judicial-bureau>.

- b. Technical issues or questions related to the functioning of Odyssey File & Serve:

Please see the resources available in the “Self-Help” section on the OFS homepage. These resources include live assistance with Tyler Technologies support staff through various methods (phone, email, live chat) as well as a variety of user guides, FAQs and other sources of information.