



Juvenile eFiling Guide

NOTE: This guide is NOT intended to be a comprehensive guide to use of the Odyssey File & Serve System. It provides supplemental division-specific guidance for eFiling in the Juvenile Docket. Detailed instructions about registering and using the eFiling system are available at:

<https://vermont.tylerhost.net/ofsweb> -Self-Help section of the eFiling website contains links to manuals for general system use, as well as various other help resources including training videos and webinars.

<https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/about-vermont-judiciary/electronic-access/electronic-filing> - VT Judiciary website eFiling page, contains division-specific filer guides, videos and training and support information.

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Accessing Odyssey File & Serve

All Vermont Courts have adopted universal eFiling 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’s eFiling page at <https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/about-vermont-judiciary/electronic-access/electronic-filing> or directly at:<https://vermont.tylerhost.net/ofsweb>

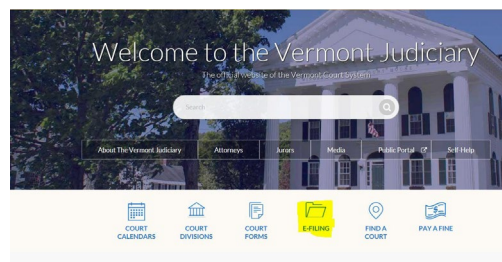
Registration

Registration for eFiling 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.

Note: all users including attorneys and self-represented litigants who choose to efile must self-register. Courtstaff cannot complete registrations on behalf of filers or edit any user’s registration information.

Training and Support

- For general information and questions about use of the e filing system, on the OFS homepage <https://vermont.tylerhost.net/ofswb> 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, messaging and other contact options for support
 - Training videos
 - Downloadable user guides
- Vermont-specific guides about filing in various division and case types are on the Judiciary website’s e filing page <https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/about-vermont-judiciary/electronic-access/electronic-filing>, also accessible here from the homepage:



- There is also a Judiciary e filing helpdesk for Vermont-specific e filing procedural questions at JUD.EFileSupport@vermont.gov *Please use this email for e filing questions and do not send e filing questions to the main Judiciary Helpdesk email.*

Using Templates

Users may create templates for particular common filing types where any non-case specific codes and fields of data may be prefilled and saved, to increase efficiency when making a filing of that type. Below is a summary of the steps involved but see Ch. 8 of the Tyler Firm User Guide for detailed information about creating and using templates.

Creating A Template

1. Select Use a Template
2. Choose New Template
3. New Template dialogue opens
4. Complete as much information in each section as applicable – See Section 3 re: Filings
5. Save changes after each section
 - a. Fees – Payment Account – Select Waiver
6. Continue when all information you want to put in the template is complete
7. The template will load and show all information you entered, if all is ok Save Template
8. To file using a template, select “Use a Template” from the Filer Dashboard:

New Filing

Filing into Existing Cases

All existing pending and closed cases that were in the old case management system (VTADS) will be searchable in OFS and available for making subsequent filings by clicking “File into Existing Case” from the Filer Dashboard. For these cases, use the existing docket number in its full original format (including the 4 letter county initial/docket code at the end. Use dashes and no spaces in the numbers, then a space before the letters). Some case and party types are “masked” in OFS for confidentiality reasons, meaning that names and other identifying information are not displayed to filers. These types include Juvenile, Mental Health and Relief from Abuse filings. For these types, you will need to know the county/unit and the docket/case number in order to file into it.

For very old cases (generally pre-1990) that were never in the VTADS system, they will not be searchable to file into in OFS. Any filings for such cases may/must be submitted to the court through alternative means (mail or email with clerk’s permission).

Filing a New CHINS Case

1. Case Information

- a. Location: Use dropdown or start typing the appropriate county
- b. Case Category: Select Family
- c. Case Type: Use the dropdown to select the appropriate type
 - i. CHINS A – Abandoned or Abused by Parent/Guardian/Custodian
 - ii. CHINS B – Without Parental Care of Subsistence (Neglect)
 - iii. CHINS C – Is Without or Beyond the Control of Parent/Guardian/Custodian
 - iv. CHINS D – Habitually and Without Justification Truant

Note: only 1 CHINS case type may be filed at a time. There is no mechanism for filing a “combined” CHINS case with multiple types- one must be chosen, or separate petitions must be filed in such situations.

2. Party Information

- a. Petitioner defaults as the first Party Type to add
- b. ✓ Party is a Business or Agency
- c. Business Name – State of Vermont *This defaults in the Filing, you only need to add the appropriate attorney for the State
- d. Save Changes (you will do this after each party is added)
- e. Juvenile defaults as the second Party Type to add
 - i. Complete the juvenile’s name, DOB and any other known information
- f. Save Changes
- g. Parent/Guardian/Custodian defaults as the third Party Type to add
- h. Save Changes
- i. Once the default parties are added, you can add more parties by going to this section and selecting Add Another Party such as the second parent, DCF, etc.
- j. If the petition is being filed against both parents/guardians/custodians, you will need to use the Add

Another Party to also add this party to the filing

- k. When you are using the Add Another Party function, select their appropriate role such as Mother or Father rather than Parent/Guardian/Custodian
- l. Continue this way until all parties are added
 - i. DCF itself can be added as an agency
 - ii. DCF Caseworker can be added as DCF Worker

Please note, the system is not configured to enter Race, or Ethnicity (if applicable) for the juvenile CHINS cases, however these are still required fields for all juvenile filings so they must be complete on the petition you file; they will be entered by the clerk on the Odyssey side.

3. Filings

- a. Filing Type – Defaults to Efile
 - b. Filing Code – Use the dropdown or start typing – JCHINSFILE (Juvenile CHINS Petition and Affidavit) should be used as the lead filing code
 - c. Lead Document – Upload the Petition and Affidavit
 - d. Security – Should default to Confidential, if not, use the dropdown to select confidential
 - e. Attachments – Upload any additional documents that are appropriate and specific to the lead filing such as additional affidavits
 - f. Save Changes
- If an emergency motion is being filed with this case such as for a temporary care order or emergency conditional custody order, once you save changes for this section, go back to this section and select Add Another Filing – it is recommended that you also alert the Juvenile Clerk by phone or email if this is an emergency filing
- g. Filing Code – Use the dropdown to select the appropriate motion - *NOTE most juvenile events contain the word juvenile in them – ex. Motion Juvenile for Emergency Care Order or Motion Juvenile for Emergency Conditional Custody Order
 - h. Lead Document – Upload the motion

4. Fees

- a. Payment Account – Use dropdown to select Waiver – **the Waiver Account must be set up by the firm administrator. See instructions available at <https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/about-vermont-judiciary/electronic-access/electronic-filing>

5. Submission Agreements

- a. ✓ I certify that ...filer must check both.
- b. Select Summary
- c. The case will reload for you to review
 - i. Submit once you are sure you have everything correct
- d. The filing is now submitted
- e. You will get a confirmation email that the filing was submitted which will include the envelope number for the filing – you will receive another email with the case number when the clerk accepts the filing into Odyssey

Filing a New Delinquency or Youthful Offender Case

Case Information

- i. Case Category: Select Criminal (In Odyssey and OFS, Delinquencies and Youthful Offenders are under the Criminal case category, although they continue to be heard in the Family Division in Vermont)
- ii. Case Type: Use the dropdown to select the appropriate type
 1. Delinquency
 2. Youthful Offender

b. Charge Information

- i. Date of Offense – Enter the offense date – 4-digit year is required or use the date picker
- ii. Offense – Select the Search function
- iii. Type in the numeric offense code or the offense name and enter or click on the magnifying glass to find the code
- iv. Select the appropriate offense
- v. Save
- vi. Degree – Use the dropdown to select the degree
- vii. Arrest Date – Enter the Arrest Date – 4-digit year is required or use the date picker

2. Party Information

- a. Enter the juvenile's name, DOB, Race, Ethnicity (if applicable) and any other known information
 - b. Save Changes
 - c. If the juvenile is under 18, you will need to add another party for the parent(s), guardian or custodian
 - i. Once you Save Changes after adding the juvenile, go back to this section and select Add Another Party
 - d. Continue this way until all parties are added
- Note – For Delinquencies and Youthful Offender cases, the State of Vermont will default as the petitioner in the case so you do not need to add yourself/agency as a party, you only need to add the attorney for the State

3. Filings

- a. Filing Type – Defaults to Efile
- b. Filing Code – Use the dropdown or start typing – JDELFILE (Juvenile Delinquency Petition and Affidavit) or JYOFFILE (Juvenile Youthful Offender Petition) should be used as the lead filing code
- c. Lead Document – Upload the Petition and Affidavit
- d. Security – Should default to Confidential, if not use the dropdown to select
- e. Attachments – Upload any additional documents that are appropriate to this case initiation filing, ex: additional affidavits
- f. Save Changes
- g. To add the Citation and Juvenile Law Enforcement Data Sheet go back to this section and select Add Another Filing, each of these should be their own lead document within this case (so you will do this step for each)
 - i. Use “Juvenile Citation” and “Juvenile Law Enforcement Data Sheet”
 - ii. If an emergency motion is being filed with this case such as for a temporary care order or

emergency conditional custody order, once you save changes for this section, go back to this section and select Add Another Filing – it is recommended that you also alert the Juvenile Clerk by phone or email if this is an emergency filing

- h. Filing Code – Use the dropdown to select the appropriate motion - *NOTE most juvenile events contain the word juvenile in them – ex. Motion Juvenile for Emergency Care Order or Motion Juvenile for Emergency Conditional Custody Order
- i. Lead Document – Upload the motion

4. Fees

- a. Payment Account – Use dropdown to select Waiver – **the Waiver Account must be set up by the firm administrator. See instructions available at <https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/about-vermont-judiciary/electronic-access/electronic-filing>

5. Submission Agreements

- a. ✓ I certify that ...
- b. Select Summary
- c. The case will reload for you to review
 - i. Submit once you are sure you have everything correct
- d. The filing is now submitted
- e. You will get a confirmation email that the filing was submitted which will include the envelope number for the filing – you will receive another email with the case number when the clerk accepts the filing into Odyssey

Filing Codes with “Agency Filers Only” description:

In the rare circumstances when a non-agency filer is authorized to file one of these documents (e.g. a Termination of Parental Rights Petition), they may disregard the “agency filers only” language and use that filing code anyway. There is no system setting that will prevent the court from receiving and accepting one of these filing codes from any filer. The language is included on the filing code mainly to dissuade filers from selecting it erroneously when they are not in fact authorized to file under that code.

After hours Emergency Filings

Filings submitted through OFS are generally only reviewed during the court’s business hours. Filings received after hours will be reviewed when the Court is open.

After hours filings for RFAs, Juvenile matters and other emergencies should continue to be submitted through the current/existing procedures until further notice.

eService

The eFiling system contains a “Serve” feature that allows filers to simultaneously submit documents to the court and serve them on opposing parties/counsel who are also registered in the eFiling system.

Vermont’s Rules for Electronic Filing require service of filed documents on other efilers to take place through the system unless the parties agree in writing to an alternative method. Please see the eService Guide and other related materials on the Judiciary’s eFiling page for further details on using the Serve function.

When a filing is submitted through the eFiling system but is served on any parties through any alternative means

(because the recipient is not an efiler or because there is an agreement between the parties), the filer must also submit a certificate of service in compliance with applicable rules.

Requesting Copies

Note: many documents in newer and active cases are available to be printed and downloaded for free from the Public Portal for users with a right of access. Most older cases that have not had recent activity continue to be held in paper files from which copies must be requested.

Regular photocopies, certified copies and exemplified copies of court documents may be requested through the efilings system by filing a request into the case from which you are requesting document copies. Requests may be submitted on their own or in conjunction with other filings.

1. Using the filing code “Copy Request”, submit a letter or document clearly stating the request including the specific documents for which you want printed copies, and whether you need a regular, certified or exemplified copy and how you would like the document(s) sent to you (mail or email). Please note that certified copies produced and delivered electronically will have a certification stamp image and signature electronically applied. For some purposes and in some other jurisdictions a raised seal and original signature is required, so requests should state clearly which method is needed.
2. To submit payment for the copies, in addition to selecting the filing code and attaching a written request, the filer must select the appropriate copy type and fee from the “Optional Services” section. There are different fees for each type of copy so be sure to select the correct option.
 - 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)).
 - Certified copies have a fee of \$5.00 per document.
 - Exemplified copies have a fee of \$10.00 per document

Viewing Case Records

Case records (docket entries, orders, etc) cannot be viewed in the efilings system. Case records are available on the Vermont Judiciary Public Portal at: <https://publicportal.courts.vt.gov/Portal/>.

User guides and other information about the Public Portal is located at <https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/about-vermont-judiciary/public-portal>