

**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: Clerk Review of Electronic Initial Civil Complaints

DATE: December 9, 2021

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Beginning on Friday, December 10, 2021, initial civil complaints that are submitted using the Odyssey File and Serve code “initial filing” will be automatically entered in the Judiciary’s electronic case management system without prior staff review and acceptance. Previously, all electronic filings, including initial complaints and associated documents in such cases, were reviewed by staff before being entered into the electronic case management system. Some initial civil complaints are excepted from automatic entry, including those in small claims actions, stalking/sexual assault actions, and those within the original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, or within the jurisdiction of criminal division, family division, environmental division, probate division, or the judicial bureau.

This change means that documents and information designated by the electronic filer as public that are part of the initial filing will be immediately viewable to the public on courthouse public access terminals and on the Public Portal website for users with elevated access roles.

Documents submitted under other filing codes in the same envelope or in other envelopes will continue to be reviewed and manually accepted by staff prior to being entered into the electronic case management system.

Pursuant to Rules 7(a)(3) and (4) of the Vermont Rules for Public Access to Court Records, court staff will review all initial complaints after they are entered into the system for the presence of nonpublic information that should not be publicly viewable. As with all cases under the present rules in which this screening reveals that nonpublic documents or information are part of the initial filing, court staff will take action to protect such information from public view and will send notice to the efiler to let them know what corrective actions are needed to fix defects on the filing.