

Superior Court Standing Order 1–23 E-Filing Policies and Procedures for Civil Actions

The Superior Court adopts these policies and procedures for electronic filing (e-filing) in designated civil actions. Instructions on e-filing through www.eFileMA.com and a list of case types in which e-filing is permitted are posted on the Superior Court’s webpage, [eFiling in the Superior Court](#).¹ Filers must comply with this Standing Order and [S.J.C. Rule 1:25: Massachusetts Rules of Electronic Filing](#),² as well as other applicable Massachusetts Court Rules and Orders. Neither this Standing Order nor the Massachusetts Court Rules authorizes filing by e-mail.

E-filing involves three main steps, addressed in more detail below. First, the filer uploads documents to eFileMA, which delivers the documents to the clerk’s office for review. If the documents are too large, eFileMA automatically rejects them and notifies the filer of the problem. Second, the clerk’s office reviews the documents for compliance with technical requirements of Massachusetts Court Rules and Orders, including S.J.C. Rule 1:25, and this Standing Order. If the filing does not comply, the clerk’s office may reject the filing and notify the filer of the problem. Third, if the clerk’s office accepts the documents, the documents will be docketed.

I. Uploading documents to eFileMA

A. PDF format required

E-filed text documents must be in searchable Portable Document Format (PDF). Word-processed documents should be electronically converted to PDFs, not scanned. Any scanned PDF must be made searchable using optical-character-recognition software, such as Adobe Acrobat, with a resolution of 200 dots per inch (dpi), in black and white. No PDF shall be locked or password protected.

B. Size limits on e-filings

The size limit for a single e-filed document is 25 megabytes (MB), and for a single e-filed envelope is 50MB. If a filing exceeds the limit, eFileMA automatically rejects the filing and notifies the filer of the problem. The filer may divide a large document or envelope into smaller

¹ www.mass.gov/guides/efiling-in-the-superior-court#-which-cases-can-be-efiled-in-the-superior-court? The webpage includes a hyperlink to eFileMA, with training videos, helpful tips, and other resources, and includes a hyperlink to the Guide on How to eFile at the Superior Court, with additional information about e-filing.

² www.mass.gov/supreme-judicial-court-rules/supreme-judicial-court-rule-125-massachusetts-rules-of-electronic-filing

parts to fall within the limit. Separate parts of a document or envelope must be clearly labeled sequentially as, for example, “Volume 1 of 2.”

C. Rule 9A compliance

E-filed civil motions must comply with Superior Court Rule 9A,³ unless they fall within an exception under Rule 9A(d) (emergency motions, ex parte motions, motions for appointment of special process server, motions involving incarcerated parties). See E-Filing Instructions for 9A Package and for Summary Judgment.⁴

D. No duplicate copies

No filer shall provide any duplicate or “courtesy” copies of e-filed documents, either electronically or in hard copy, unless expressly requested by the clerk or permitted by the presiding judge.

E. Emergency filings and requests for immediate attention

E-filed documents will be processed by the clerk’s office as soon as reasonably possible, but filers should expect that most e-filed documents will take twenty-four to forty-eight hours or more to be reviewed and, if accepted, docketed. For emergency motions or other matters of an urgent nature—for instance, an affidavit submitted in opposition to a preliminary injunction motion that is scheduled to be heard by the court in less than twenty-four hours—the filer must alert the court in the following three ways:

1. On the eFileMA screen that says “Enter the details for this filing,” in the space labeled “Filing Description,” the filer must type in all capital letters “EMERGENCY FILING” or “IMMEDIATE REVIEW REQUESTED,” as applicable, as the first words of the description.
2. The top of the first page of the e-filed document must state, in boldface type, “**Emergency Filing,**” or “**Immediate Review Requested.**”
3. The filer must notify the clerk’s office with a telephone call.

³ www.mass.gov/superior-court-rules/superior-court-rule-9a-civil-motions

⁴ www.mass.gov/doc/efiling-instructions-for-9a-package-and-for-summary-judgment/download

F. Impounded documents

Impounded documents, under Trial Court Rule VIII: Uniform Rules on Impoundment Procedure, shall be filed with the clerk's office in hard copy form only. No impounded document or motion to impound shall be e-filed.

II. Clerk's review

The clerk shall review each filing for compliance with Massachusetts Court Rules and Orders, including S.J.C. Rule 1:25, and this Standing Order, before entering the filing on the docket. The clerk shall notify the filer if the filing was accepted or rejected. The clerk may reject any non-compliant filing, may identify the error, and may set a deadline for the filer to resubmit the document in a compliant format. Submission of an e-filed document that is rejected for non-compliance shall not toll any statute of limitations or other mandatory or statutory deadline for filing such document. S.J.C. Rule 1:25, Rule 5.

III. Time documents deemed filed

When the clerk accepts a document and docketing it, the document shall be considered filed with the court at the time filing was acknowledged through eFileMA, as follows: an accepted document uploaded to eFileMA by 11:59 p.m. on a weekday shall be deemed filed on that date or, if it is a weekend or legal holiday, on the next court business day.

So ordered,



Heidi E. Brieger
Chief Justice of the Superior Court

Adopted: January 13, 2023

Effective: February 1, 2023