



FOR SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS WITHOUT EMAIL ADDRESSES
HELPFUL E-FILE INFORMATION

Is Electronic filing (E-Filing) mandatory for me?

Yes! E-filing is mandatory for all civil cases except for:

- ex parte motions,
- adoptions,
- bond validations,
- domestication of foreign judgments,
- surrogacy declaratory judgment,
- termination of parental rights,
- family violence temporary protective orders, and
- fieri facias (“fi.fa.”) actions.

Can I create an eFileGA account?

No, you cannot register for eFileGA without an email address. If you have access to a computer and would like to register for eFileGA, there are plenty of free email providers, including Hotmail, Gmail, and Yahoo. Once you set up an email account, please refer to the “Helpful E-File Information for Self-Represented Litigants With Email Addresses.”

Where can I e-file if I don’t have an eFileGA account?

You must file from a Public Access Terminal (PAT) at the Courthouse.

Is there a charge for e-filing?

No. There is never a charge for filing or serving at a PAT. Unless the Court has signed an Order Granting In Forma Pauperis for you in this case, court fees will still apply.

After I file, how will I know if my document was accepted by the Clerk’s office?

If you are filing from the PAT, you must stop by the Clerk of Court’s counter to confirm that your filing is accepted. If you owe court fees, you will be required to pay them at the Clerk of Court’s counter. Be sure to record your assigned draft # on the attached piece of paper so that it will be easier for the clerk to locate your filing.

Can I use eFileGA to serve documents that I file on other parties?

Not for initial service. Service is the required formal process of notifying the Respondent that the action has been filed. There are basically three ways for service to be completed:

(1) the Respondent signs acknowledgment of Service, (2) service by the sheriff's department or other approved process server, or (3) publication. Once the other party has been initially served, you can use eFileGA to serve additional documents on the other party, unless another party has entered a Certificate of No Email.

Is there a charge to serve the parties?

If you require service by the Fulton County Sheriff (for cases where the service address is in Fulton County), you will pay for service at the Clerk's counter and take your receipt along with your service packet to the Sheriff's Office located on the 9th floor of the Justice Center Tower (JCT). If you require service by another county's Sheriff, you will need to contact that Sheriff's office for mailing/service instructions. Once the other party has been initially served, there is no additional service fee if you are filing from a PAT or if you have an Order Granting In Forma Pauperis on file in your case.

How will I know when other parties file into our case?

The Certificate of No Email that you file into your case will notify other parties that they must serve you through U.S. Postal Service or through other traditional means that allowed under Georgia's statutes.

OTHER COMMON QUESTIONS

How do I file a handwritten or paper copy of a document through eFileGA?

All documents filed to eFileGA must be converted to PDF format. You will need a scanner to scan your document into a computer that has the capacity to convert documents to PDF.

I don't have a scanner. Where can I find one?

You can scan documents at the Courthouse in the Clerk of Court's office or in the Law Library. If you need to scan your documents after hours, you may be able to do so at certain businesses like Office Max, Office Depot, or Kinko's. Fees may apply. You will need to take a thumb drive or other electronic file storage device with you to save your PDF once created.

I created my document on a word processor on my computer. How do I convert it to PDF so that I can file it?

There are several free converter software tools available on the internet. One such service is CutePDF which is available for download at www.cutepdf.com. You may also be able to save your document by choosing "save as" and selecting a pdf format as the save as type.

I have an email address but I don't have a home computer. Where can I go to create documents to file in my case?

You can log into eFileGA from any computer with internet access and a current browser. If you don't have a computer or internet access at your home, you can log in from a friend or relative's computer or visit a branch of the Fulton County Public Library. Computers are also available at the Law Library.