

Guidelines for e-Filing

Till the time of formulation/ circulation of rules regarding e-filing in Subordinate Courts, following guidelines will operate as guiding force and learned District and Session Judges may formulate additional guidelines, as per requirement:

1. General Instructions

1.1. On-line e-filing shall be made by visiting the web portal of the Court, namely <https://efiling-phc.ecourts.gov.in/>.

1.2. Except as provided in these guidelines, Actions, whether in fresh, pending or disposed of cases, will be filed electronically by an advocate or litigant in person from their home, office or other remote location in the manner provided in these guidelines.

1.3. Any person who is unable to access the e-filing portal would be entitled to make use of the facilities provided at the **Designated Counters** for that purpose.

1.4. The size of the e-file should not exceed 50MB. In case the file size exceeds 50MB, the Advocate or litigant should visit any one of the Designated Centres for enabling e-filing through the intranet.

2. Steps for Registration

2.1. Persons other than Advocates and litigants in person who are already registered on the Court web portal will take the following steps to register themselves:

i) Advocates

a) Before online registration as e-filing user, counsel should be added to the local CIS database of this court.

- b) *To get added in CIS database, download the advocate form from the website of this court.*
- c) *Fill the form with requisite details.*
- d) *Submit the filled-up form along with a self-attested copy of the Bar Council Registration Certificate or Bar Council I-card (in PDF format only) to the registry/ office of the court or sent through email.*
- e) *After addition of name in CIS database, advocate has to follow the online registration process for e-filing available on the e-filing portal.*
- f) *Should visit the web portal (<https://efiling-phc.ecourts.gov.in/register>) to view the form.*
- g) *Click the registration link.*
- h) *Fill the form with requisite details.*
- i) *Submit the filled-up form along with a self-attested copy of the Bar Council Registration Certificate or Bar Council I-card (in PDF format only).*
- ii) *Litigants in person*
 - a) *Should follow the online registration process for e-filing available on the website of this court.***
 - b) *Should visit the web portal (<https://efiling-phc.ecourts.gov.in/register>) to view the form.*
 - c) *Click the registration link.*
 - d) *Fill the form with requisite details.*
 - e) *Submit the filled-up form along with the self-attested copy of any identity document issued by the Government (in PDF format only).*

2.2. Litigants in person shall submit an affidavit/undertaking that they have not engaged an Advocate in the Action. A litigant in person, who subsequently engages an Advocate, shall make an application before the Administrator for transferring the data in respect of the Action to the Advocate's account in. Once the Administrator allows the application, the data in the Action shall be transferred in the user account of the Advocate. The litigant in person will not be in a position to modify the data of the subject Action, without the permission of the Administrator.

2.3. A login ID will be allotted on the next working day if the application is found complete in all respects. The procedure for registration is set out in Appendix-II.

3. Frame of Pleadings

All the pleadings of the parties should be in accordance with Rules and Orders of The Punjab & Haryana High Court and the instructions issued thereto from time to time.

4. Formatting

4.1. All the original suits/ complaints etc typed text material including notice, memorandum of parties, main petition or appeal, interlocutory application(s), reply, status report, affidavit, documents, will be prepared as per High Court rules and orders.

4.2. The document should be converted into Optical Character Recognition (OCR) searchable Portable Document Format PDF/A using any PDF converter or in-built PDF conversion plug-in provided in the software.

4.3. A document which is not a text document and has to be enclosed with the Action, should be scanned using an image resolution of 300 DPI (Dots per inch) in OCR searchable mode and saved as a PDF document.

5. Signatures

- (i) An electronically filed document must include a signature block setting forth the name, mailing address, phone number, fax number, and email address of the filing party's advocate or party where it is not represented by an advocate.
- (ii) In addition, the name of the filing party's advocate must be preceded by a "sd/-" and typed in the space where the signature would otherwise appear. A handwritten signature is required for any conventionally filed document.
- (iii) Affidavits and exhibits to pleadings with original handwritten

signatures must be scanned and uploaded in PDF or PDF/A format.

(iv) Where a document requires signatures of more than one party it may be filed either by:

(a) representing the consent of the other parties on the document by inserting in the location where each handwritten signature would otherwise appear the typed signature of each person, other than the filing party, preceded by a "sd/-" and followed by the words "by permission" (e.g., "sd/- AB by permission"); and by

(b) electronically filing a scanned document containing all necessary signatures.

(c) The signature on any document required to be notarized, acknowledged, verified, or made under oath must be handwritten and scanned into the eFiling system. The court will maintain the scanned document as the official court record, and the filing party must file the original documents with the pleadings by conventional filing.

6. Dos and Don't's

6.1. The text documents and scanned documents set out in clauses 6.3 and 7.1 should be merged as a single OCR searchable PDF file and should be book-marked as per the Master Index, duly approved by the Office.

6.2. Once e-filing is accepted, the filing or registration number shall be notified to the Advocate or litigant in person.

6.3. In case on-line e-filing includes audio and/or video files, the Administrator shall generate a hash value.

6.4. Special Characters are not allowed while e-filing Memo of Parties and Advocate remarks.

6.5. Document Binary File Name Standards

The following special characters are not allowed in a file name:

- A quotation mark (")

- A number sign/Pound (#)
- Per cent (%)
- Ampersand (&)
- Asterisk (*)
- Colon (:)
- Angle brackets (less than, greater than) (<>)
- A question mark (?)
- Backslash (\)
- Forward slash (/)
- Braces (left and right) ({ })
- Pipe (|)
- A tilde (~)
- The period (.) character used consecutively in the middle of the file name or at the beginning or end of the file name.

File names should not exceed 45 characters in length, including spaces. Single space must be counted as one character each.

- 6.6. On-line e-filing shall not be watermarked or encrypted. The e-filed documents shall not contain any virus, malware, spam-ware, trojan horse or the like. All the e- filed documents shall be legible and free of markings, track changes or annotations.

7. Payment of Court Fees/Other Charges

Court fee and other charges can be paid either electronically by purchase on the on- line facility provided by the authorised agency or from the Designated Counters provided for the purpose in the High Court and District Courts or from any authorized court fee vendor. The Transaction ID provided upon payment of court fee and other charges is required to be entered in the appropriate field at the time of on-line e-filing.

8. Hard Copies of Pleadings and Documents filed Electronically

Advocates, as well as parties shall continue to file the hard copies within 3 days of the e-filing of the petition. Provided that the case will be listed for hearing only after filing of the hard copies.

9. Access to the Electronic Data of the Action

Free of cost access will be available to authorized person(s) to data e--filed by any of the parties to the specific Action, as is presently being provided in pending Actions. This facility shall be in addition to the procedure of obtaining certified copies.

10. Storage and Retrieval of e-Filed Documents and Pleadings

The pleadings and documents electronically filed will be stored on an available server maintained for this purpose in consultation with Nodal Officer Computerization. Each case will be separately labelled and encrypted for this purpose to facilitate easy identification and retrieval. The security of such documents and pleadings will be ensured and access to them would be restricted in the manner in consultation with Nodal Officer Computerization as may be notified from time to time. Backup copies of all electronically filed pleadings and documents will be preserved in the manner decided by the Court on its administrative side.

11. Since e-filing rules are yet to be framed and servers are yet to be established at several locations, the observations of these guidelines will be subject to availability of resources.