

Rule 4.7-1 Electronic Filing of Legal Papers**(a) Authorization for Electronic Filing.**

1. Effective January 1, 2023, the Orphans' Court Division of the Court of Common Pleas of Lehigh County (hereafter, "the Court"), mandates the electronic filing of legal papers in all Orphans' Court cases, with the exception of Guardians' Inventories, pursuant to 20 Pa.C.S.A. §§5142 and 5541(b) and Guardians' Annual Reports pursuant to 20 Pa.C.S.A. §5521(c)(i) and (ii), which may be filed in paper form with the Court, or filed through the AOPC's Guardianship Tracking System ("GTS"). All electronically filed legal papers shall be subject to all state and local Orphans' Court Rules in the same manner as those legal papers permitted to be filed in paper form.
2. Effective January 1, 2023, the Clerk of Judicial Records of Lehigh County - Register of Wills Division (hereafter, "Register of Wills"), mandates the electronic filing of legal papers regarding the grant of letters and inheritance tax returns, provided however that testamentary writings (Wills and Codicils) must also be filed in paper form. Original Wills and Codicils will be maintained by the Register of Wills for a minimum period of ten (10) years. All electronically filed legal papers shall be subject to all state and local Orphans' Court Rules in the same manner as those legal papers permitted to be filed in paper form.

3. Format of Electronically Filed Legal Papers

1. All electronically filed legal papers shall be in Portable Document Format (hereafter, "PDF").
2. An administrative fee of \$1.00 per page will be charged to convert a legal paper and/or exhibit presented for filing from paper form to PDF. The paper copy shall be returned to the filing party for retention pursuant to Pa.R.O.C.P. 4.7(c)(3).

4. Signature, Verification and Retention of Legal Paper

1. A legal paper filed electronically is deemed an original document.
2. A legal paper filed electronically must include a signature block for the name of the authorized filer.
3. A required signature shall be supplied either by filing a scanned image of the legal paper that bears the original signature of the filer, or, by affixing the digitalized signature, or the name of the filer preceded by /s/, and the printed name of the filer's attorney, to the electronically filed legal paper.

5. **Website and Filing Date**
 1. The website for electronically filing legal papers through the Court's electronic filing application known as "Odyssey File and Serve" (hereafter, "OFS") is: <https://pennsylvania.tylertech.cloud/ofswweb>
 2. To use the OFS system all parties and counsel must register User Name and Password by supplying a valid email address and creating an account for payment of filing fees.
 3. Each filer will receive courtesy email notification of the date and time that a legal paper was received in OFS, and within 6 business hours thereafter, will receive further email notification of the legal paper's acceptance or rejection for filing.
 4. The filing date of a legal paper accepted for filing that is accompanied by payment of the filing fee, is the date that it was received. Except as otherwise provided by Pa.R.O.C.P. 1.40 and Pa.R.Civ.P. 240, pertaining to petitions to proceed in forma pauperis, the filing date of an accepted legal pleading unaccompanied by the filing fee, is the date on which the filing fee is paid. *See*, 42 P.S. §21073(b) The notification of a legal paper's rejection for filing shall include the reason therefor.

6. **Delay in Filing**

Petitions to resolve disputes involving alleged failure of the Court's website, permitted by Pa. R.O.C. P. 4.7(e), may be filed and served in paper form.

7. **Fees**
 1. Payment of filing fees may be made electronically by: Visa, Mastercard and Discover. Electronic payment of filing fees by eCheck is limited to attorneys and law firms.
 2. Payment of filing fees in person at the Office of the Clerk of the Orphans' Court may be made in cash or by Visa, Mastercard and Discover. Attorneys may pay filing fees in person by check, and non-lawyers may pay filing fees in person by money order payable to the Clerk of the Orphans' Court.
 3. Payment of filing fees in person at the Office of the Register of Wills may be made in cash, check or by Visa, Mastercard and Discover. Payment of Inheritance Tax shall only be made by check or money order payable to Register of Wills Agent.
 4. All credit/debit card payments will incur a convenience fee assessed by the credit card vendor.

- 4.7.2 **Marriage Licenses - RESERVED**