
Serving Documents by Mail

All documents you file with the court in your case must be served on all other parties. Some documents, such as discovery requests and responses, are not filed with the court but must still be served. See the videos and Step-by-Step guides on [Discovery](https://www.saclaw.org/legal_topic/discovery-process-to-get-evidence-from-other-side/) for more information.

Templates and Forms

- [Proof of Service by Mail \(POS-030\)](https://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/pos030.pdf)
- [Attachment to Proof of Service by First-Class Mail – Civil \(Persons Served\) \(POS-030\(P\)\)](https://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/pos030p.pdf)
- [Attachment to Proof of Service by First-Class Mail – Civil \(Documents Served\) \(POS-030\(D\)\)](https://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/pos030d.pdf)

These instructions apply to most types of responsive pleadings, such as Answers and Demurrers. They also apply to Motions, with the exception that you may file three, rather than two, copies with the court. Two is the maximum number of copies the court will officially stamp “Endorsed/Filed,” and give back to you, but with Motions, the court requires an extra copy for the judge to review prior to the hearing.

These instructions **DO NOT** apply to case-initiating paperwork, such as Summons, Complaints, Orders to Show Cause, Ex Parte Motions, or Restraining Orders. Case-initiating documents generally require Personal Service.

See the Step-by-Step guide on [Personal Service](https://saclaw.org/resource_library/personal-service/) for more information.

Be sure to research the type of document you need to serve, to determine if the court has any special filing rules, such as requiring a different number of copies, or whether the documents to be filed in a different department. More information is available on the Sacramento County Superior Court’s web page, [Civil Filings and Procedures](https://www.saccourt.ca.gov/civil/filing-instructions.aspx).

Responsive paperwork and Motions are served prior to filing with the court. The court will not accept these documents unless they are accompanied by a signed Proof of Service.

You cannot serve your own documents.

Documents must be served by someone over 18 who is not a party to the case.

Step by Step Instructions

Filing Party

1 Step 1: Complete Forms and Make Photocopies

Complete the forms or documents you wish to have served.

Make a photocopy of each document for each party, plus two photocopies for the court (two is the maximum number of copies the court will endorse, or officially stamp “Endorsed/Filed”). Make an additional copy for yourself, if you want one for your records while you wait for the court to return the endorsed copies, which may take up to six weeks.

2 Step 2: Select Your Server

Documents must be served by someone over 18 who is not a party to the case. Give the copies you made in Step 2 to the person mailing your documents.

3 Step 3: Fill out Proof of Service by Mail Form

Instructions for completing this form are at the end of this Guide.

The server can complete this step and the next step if preferred.

Fill out the caption, the name(s) of the documents being served in Item 3, and the name(s) and addresses of the parties in Item 5 of [Proof of Service by Mail \(POS-030\)](#) (<https://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/pos030.pdf>). Leave items 2, the rest of 3, and 4 blank for the server to complete.

If more than one party is being served, attach [Attachment to Proof of Service by First-Class Mail – Civil \(Persons Served\) \(POS-030\(P\)\)](#) (<https://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/pos030p.pdf>), and list all persons to whom copies were mailed.

If there is not enough room on *Proof of Service by Mail* (POS-030) to list all the documents being served, attach [Attachment to Proof of Service by First-Class Mail – Civil \(Documents Served\) \(POS-030\(D\)\)](#) (<https://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/pos030d.pdf>), and list each document served.

4 Step 4: Photocopy the Proof of Service Form

Make a photocopy of the **unsigned** *Proof of Service* (POS-030) (and attachments, if used) for each party to be served. Give those copies to the server, as well.

Server

1 Step 1: Prepare the Documents for Service

The party can prepare these ahead of time, or have the server do it.

For each party to be served, put one copy of the documents to be served in an envelope, along with a copy of the unsigned *Proof of Service* (POS-030).

Address the envelope(s) to the attorney(s) or self-represented litigant(s) persons being served at the address listed in the caption of his/her/its/their court papers. If the party is represented by an attorney, the attorney, rather than the party, should be served. Adequate postage must be on the envelope. Make a copy of the envelope for the records of the party for whom you are serving the documents.

2 Step 2: Mail the Documents

Deposit the envelope with the US Postal Service, either at the post office or in a regular post office mail box. If your place of business has regular mail pick-up, and mail deposited in the business's outgoing mail is delivered to the post office the **same day**, the envelope may be placed in your business's outgoing mail drop.

3 Step 3: Sign the Original Proof of Service Form

You will be signing under penalty of perjury that you mailed the documents listed on the *Proof of Service* (POS-030) form.

Filing Party, Server, or Anyone Else

1 Step 1: Make Photocopies

Make two photocopies of the signed *Proof of Service* (POS-030) form. Make an additional copy if the party for whom the documents were served wants one for his or her records while waiting for the court to return the endorsed copy.

2 Step 2: Assemble the Documents for Filing

Originals packet - The original document(s) served, and the original *Proof of Service* (POS-030). The original document is the one with original signatures and should be left unstapled.

Copies packets - Photocopies of the documents served and signed *Proof of Service* (POS-030). These packets should be stapled. You should have at least two copies packets. You may have a third copies packet if the filing party made one to keep for their records while waiting for the court to return the endorsed copies.

3 Step 3: File the Documents at the Courthouse

Most documents will be placed in the drop box in the filing room of the Sacramento Superior Court at 500 G St., Second Floor, Sacramento CA 95814. Fill out and attach the [Civil Document Drop-Off Sheet](https://www.saccourt.ca.gov/forms/docs/cv-drop-off-sheet.pdf) and date stamp the back of the original packet.

Following the instructions posted at the drop box, place the unstapled original document packet plus two copies of the packet in the drop box, along with a **check or cashier's check** for the filing fee, if any. Provide the court with a self-addressed stamped envelope with sufficient postage to facilitate the return of your documents to the filing party. The remaining copy packet, if any, is for your records.

The court will process the paperwork, and return the two copies packets, stamped "Endorsed/Filed," to the filing party. The court will retain the original papers for its file.

As of May 2023, credit card transactions for payment of fees and certified copies will be limited to in-person front counter filings. There will be no extra processing fee for using a credit card for payment.

Payments for the following fees will not be accepted via credit card: Reporters Transcript deposit, jury fees, Court Reporter fees, and Undertaking deposit. These fees must be paid by check or cashier's check.

Payment for filings made via mail or the drop box must be made by check or cashier's check. Cash is not accepted via mail or the drop box.

Samples

[If images do not appear, download them as a pdf. \(https://saclaw.org/image-samples-67/\)](https://saclaw.org/image-samples-67/)

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