



Office of Administrative Hearings Special Education Division

Electronic Filing & Service Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

The Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) encourages parties to submit, and agree to receive, documents electronically. Currently, OAH must serve primary copies of documents by U.S. Mail or fax. However, to expedite the service of documents OAH now allows parties to receive courtesy copies of documents by email by submitting a [“Consent to Electronic Service Agreement”](#). Please refer to the information below for responses to frequently asked questions about electronic service. If you require further information, please contact the OAH Special Education Division at (916) 263-0880 and request to speak with a case manager.

1. What is electronic filing and service?

Electronic filing is the service of documents between parties electronically, specifically email. Electronic service offers an alternative method of serving documents between OAH and parties.



Figure 1: Displays the function of Electronic Service facilitating the service of documents between the OAH and parties.

Parties may submit documents as email attachments to OAH's Special Education (SE) Filings mailbox (SEFilings@dgs.ca.gov) at any time. If a party wishes to receive courtesy copies of documents issued from OAH to a designated email, they need only complete and submit a [Consent to Electronic Service Agreement](#). It is recommended that each party add SENotices@dgs.ca.gov to their email contacts to ensure that the documents sent by OAH do not fall into a 'SPAM' folder or are rejected. (Emailed courtesy copies sent from OAH will be sent from SENotices@dgs.ca.gov.)

2. What are the benefits of electronic filing and service?

Electronic filing provides an efficient, cost-effective alternative to traditional methods of document service. Electronic filing is a more easily accessible service option since many individuals do not have immediate access to a fax

machine. Also, the service of case related information to parties is expedited, benefitting parties, as information is often time-sensitive in Special Education matters.

3. What does it cost to participate in electronic filing?

There is no cost to participate in electronic filing as there are many free email providers available via the internet.

4. What items are needed to participate in electronic filing?

To participate in electronic filing you must have access to the internet and an email service provider. (Examples of free email service providers include: Gmail, Yahoo!, Mail, Hotmail, and GMX Mail.) Since documents must be submitted as an attachment in PDF file format, you will need access to a PDF file converter like the free online converters found at the following websites: www.freepdfconvert.com or www.pdfonline.com/convert-pdf. Also, versions of Microsoft Word 2007 and newer have PDF converter capabilities – please refer to your software literature to verify your software’s abilities. (For more information pertaining to document criteria for submission via email, please refer to the [Electronic Filing Guidelines](#).)

5. How do I participate in electronic filing?

For submitting documents to OAH, anyone may submit a document electronically to the SE Filings mailbox (SEFilings@dgs.ca.gov), as long as it meets the requirements listed in the [Electronic Filing Guidelines](#).

To receive a courtesy copy of documents from OAH by email, a party must complete and submit a [Consent to Electronic Service Agreement](#). Parties have the option to participate in electronic service for either one specific case or for all cases in which they are involved (these options are indicated on the agreement).

6. Where can I obtain necessary forms for electronic filing?

On the OAH Special Education website all information pertaining to electronic filing can be found at: <http://www.dgs.ca.gov/oah/SpecialEducation/E-Filing.aspx>. Parties are required to complete and submit a [Consent to Electronic Service Agreement](#) to receive a courtesy copy of documents from OAH by email.

No forms are necessary to submit documents electronically to OAH, however, please be sure that all documents submitted to SEFilings@dgs.ca.gov meet the [Electronic Filing Guidelines](#).

7. What is a 'courtesy copy'?

A courtesy copy is a secondary copy being provided to you as a courtesy in addition to the primary service of a document. Currently, OAH does not offer email service as a primary method of service. The current primary service options include: fax and U.S. Mail.

Note: A courtesy copy to OAH is not necessary; a document submitted to OAH by fax or email to the SEFilings@dgs.ca.gov mailbox is sufficient.

8. What are the electronic service options?

Below are the options for method of service available on the [Consent to Electronic Service Agreement](#).

II). Method of Service (Select ONE option): The Office of Administrative Hearings will serve your documents according to the option indicated below. Please verify that your fax equipment and/or email service work properly at all times in order to facilitate your selection.

Complete the information for the desired service option selected below. Please provide at least one email address (limit of two) and a mailing address per party to be used in the event there is an issue serving documents via fax or email.

<input type="checkbox"/> Option #1: Fax + Email
Fax Number: _____
Email Address: _____
2 nd Email Address (optional): _____
Street Address, City, State, Zip: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Option #2 U.S. Mail + Email
Email Address: _____
2 nd Email Address (optional): _____
Street Address, City, State, Zip: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Option #3 Fax Only
Fax Number: _____
Street Address, City, State, Zip: _____

III) TERMS AND CONDITIONS (Select ONE option):
By signing this form, you acknowledge that you agree to receive documents from OAH according to the option selected above until notified otherwise. In the event that your contact information should change it is **your** responsibility to notify OAH.

<input type="checkbox"/> I agree to accept service of documents from OAH by the option selected above for ALL current and future cases with OAH.
<input type="checkbox"/> I agree to accept service of documents from OAH by the option selected above for ONLY the case number indicated here:
<input type="checkbox"/> I no longer wish to participate in electronic service. Please cancel my previous agreement as it pertains to Case No. _____ (leave blank if cancelling for all cases).
<input type="checkbox"/> By checking this box and typing my name below, I am electronically signing this agreement.

First Name _____ Last Name _____ Date _____

9. Is electronic filing mandatory?

No, electronic filing is not mandatory but parties are highly encouraged to participate as there are many benefits to receiving and sending case documents electronically.

10. Is electronic service only applicable on a case-by-case basis?

No, when filling out the [Consent to Electronic Service Agreement](#), parties can choose to receive documents from OAH for **all** cases in which they are involved. All parties have the option to submit documents via email to the SE Filings mailbox (SEFilings@dgs.ca.gov).

11. Can more than one party in a matter participate in electronic filing?

Yes, all parties can participate. Anyone may submit documents to the SE Filings mailbox (SEFilings@dgs.ca.gov) and any party that submits a [Consent to Electronic Service Agreement](#) will receive courtesy copies of documents by email.

12. What should I do if my contact information changes?

It is each party's responsibility to notify OAH of any changes to his or her contact information (i.e. fax number, email address, telephone number, mailing address, etc.).

13. What should I do if I want to change my method of service?

Parties must submit a new [Consent to Electronic Service Agreement](#) to change their current method of service.

14. How do I cancel my Consent to Electronic Service Agreement?

OAH must be notified in writing if a party wishes to discontinue electronic service. For your convenience, the [Consent to Electronic Service Agreement](#) offers an option to cancel participation.

15. What are the requirements when submitting documents to OAH (SEFilings@dgs.ca.gov)?

- The subject line of the email must include: **1) OAH Case Number** (unless no case number assigned yet); **2) Name of Student**, and **3) Name of Document(s)** (please refer to the [Electronic Filing Guidelines](#) for common document names).
 - **Example:** 2012345678; Smith, Joe; Petitioner's Motion for Stay Put
- Must be submitted as a PDF attachment to the email.
- PDF file attachment must be titled clearly, i.e. 1) **OAH Case Number** (unless no case number assigned yet), 2) **Student Name**, and 3) **Document Name**.

- First page of document must include: 1) **OAH Case Number** (unless no case number assigned yet), 2) **Student Name**, and 3) **Document Name**.
- Document should have sequential page numbers.
- All documents must include a [Proof of Service](#) to show that the document(s) was served upon all other parties involved in the matter.

16. Should I address a filing to anyone in particular when submitting documents to OAH (SEFilings@dgs.ca.gov)?

No, if the document is titled appropriately and includes the information required according to the [Electronic Filing Guidelines](#), specifically the student's name and the case number if available, the document will be directed to the appropriate staff at the OAH.

17. Must I name my PDF file in any particular manner when submitting documents to the OAH (SEFilings@dgs.ca.gov)?

All attachments should be clearly labeled indicating the case number and/or student's name and the type of document being filed. Please see the [Electronic Filing Guidelines](#) for document title examples.

18. Are there certain hours when documents can be filed with the OAH?

Documents can be filed at any time; however, documents received outside of normal business hours (8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time) will be deemed filed as of the next business day.

19. Is there a limit on the size of documents that are submitted to OAH?

A message, including its attachments, should not exceed 50MB.

20. Should I write anything in the body of the email when submitting documents to OAH (SEFilings@dgs.ca.gov)?

Parties can write text in the body of the email; however, this text will not be considered part of the filing. *Please do not include any links in the email.* If you have a question or concern pertaining to a filing, please contact the calendar staff at the OAH special education office:

Special Education Division Office
2349 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95833-4231
Main Telephone Number: 916.263.0880
Fax: 916.376.6319

21. Can I submit exhibits electronically to OAH?

Due to the large nature of exhibits, only upon instruction from the Administrative Law Judge assigned to your hearing should exhibits be submitted electronically.

- **Exception:** If filing declarations and/or supporting documents pertaining to a motion they may be submitted in the same attachment. Please note that the different items must be identified on the first page of the document.

22. What happens if a filing submitted to OAH does not meet the requirements of the [Electronic Filing Guidelines](#)?

An OAH staff member will contact the filer to notify of any issues.