



# E-Filing Guide for Self-Represented Litigants

## How to E-File in Odyssey Step 6: Enter your Case Information



### E-filing Steps

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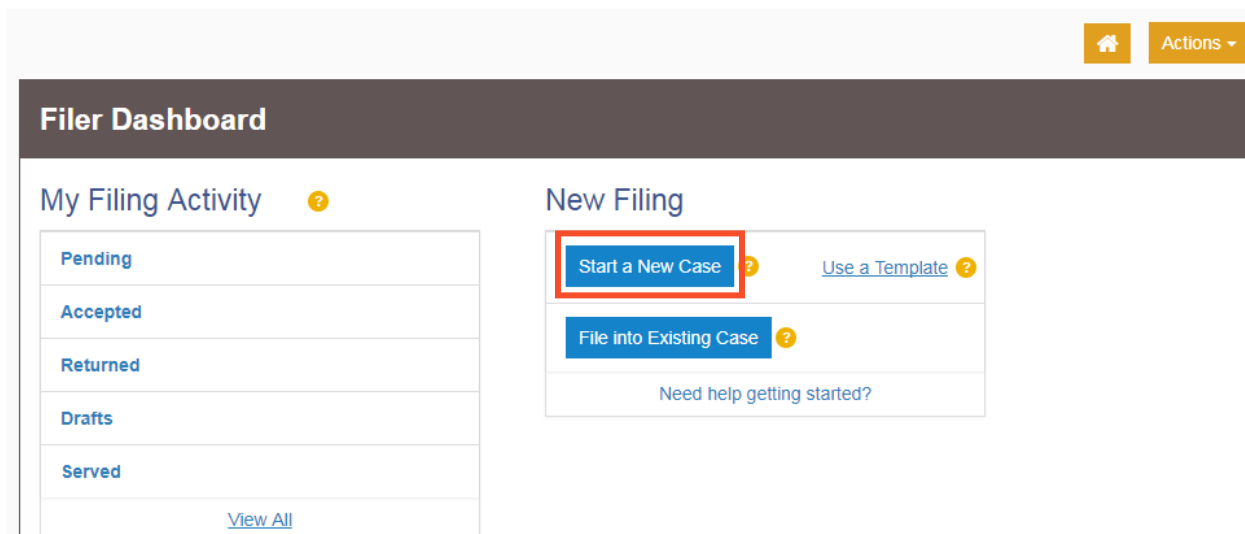


## Enter Your Case Information

This manual will go over starting a new case and filing into an existing case.

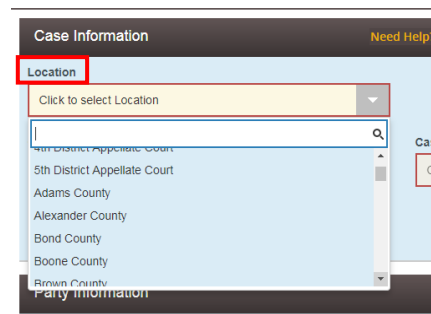
- To start a new case, you will need to know three pieces of information: (1) Location; (2) Category; and (3) Case Type.
- To file into an existing case, you will need to know two pieces of information: (1) Location; and (2) Case Number OR Party Name. (NOTE: Party Name is not searchable in some counties)

### ➤ New Case – Click Start a New Case



### ➤ Choose the Location

1. The Location means the where the case will be heard.
  - a. New cases will be filed in the trial court in the County where your case will be heard.
    - i. Family law cases can be filed in the county that you or your spouse/the other parent live in.
    - ii. Cases for money or property can be filed where the defendant lives or where the events happened that you believe give you the right to sue. For example, where the accident occurred, contract was signed, or leased premises is located.
    - iii. Name change cases can be filed in the county where you live.

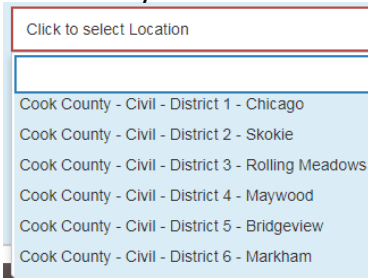


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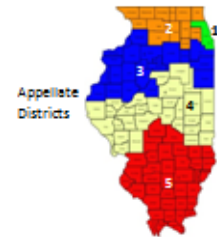
- iv. If the County you are looking for does not show up, it means that County isn't using Odyssey yet. Contact your local court to find out how you should be e-filing your documents.



**FOR COOK COUNTY:** in the Location box you will need to know three pieces of information to make your selection



1. County (Cook)
2. Division (in Cook County the Division is what is described below as Category). The options are Chancery, Civil, County, Criminal, Domestic Relations, Domestic Violence, Juvenile, Law, Probate)
3. District (in Cook County there are 6 different districts, divided up by location. Chicago is District 1). To figure out what District your city is in, go to: <http://www.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org/NewWebsite/Departments.aspx?deptType=Districts>



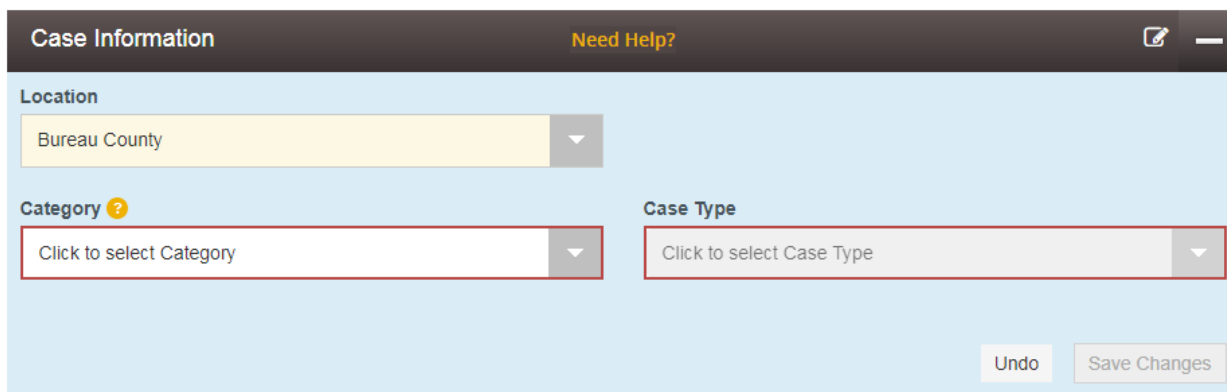
- b. If you are filing to *appeal* a trial court's decision, select the Appellate District that your County is in.
- c. If you are filing to *appeal* an appellate court's decision, select Supreme Court of Illinois.



If you are filing in an Appellate or Supreme Court, please see the E-filing Guides specific to Civil Appeals for more information about how to e-file in those courts.

2. Click in the **Location** box and a drop down menu will appear. Scroll down through the list until you find the correct location and **click** on it.

## Choose the Category and Case Type



1. The Category for e-filing is the way the court has divided up and labeled groups of Case Types.
  - a. Categories are official legal terms used by the court and may not be easy to understand or guess which types of cases would be in which Category.
  - b. The Case Type is the topic you want to address with the court.

2. The common Categories (called Divisions in Cook County) are:

Adoption	Arbitration	Chancery	Civil
Dissolution (Divorce)	Eminent Domain	Family	Law
Law Magistrate	Miscellaneous Remedy	Mental Health	Municipal Corporation
Order of Protection	Probate	Small Claims	Tax

3. To figure out what Category to select, you need to know what kind of Case Type you have. Here are commonly used Case Types and which Category they are in:

Category (called Division in Cook County)	Common Case Types
Chancery	Foreclosure
Law Magistrate (Civil in Cook)	Eviction (rent under \$50,000) NOTE: Forcible Entry and Detainer means Eviction
Order of Protection (Domestic Violence in Cook)	Order of Protection; Stalking No Contact Order; Civil No Contact Order
Small Claims (Civil in Cook)	Contract; Tort; Small Claims \$10,000 or less
Dissolution (Domestic Relations in Cook)	Dissolution of Marriage/Civil Union or Legal Separation
Family (Domestic Relations in Cook)	Parentage/Paternity; Custody/Visitation/Child Support
Probate	Guardianship of a Minor
Miscellaneous Remedy (Chancery in Cook)	Certiorari (to review administrative decisions), Administrative Review
Miscellaneous Remedy (County in Chicago, Civil in suburban Cook)	Change of Name
Law	Contract or Tort-Money Damages
Criminal	Expungement

Dissolution means Divorce 

4. Once you have figured out your Case Type and Category, you must first **click** the Category. Then the Case Types will show up, **click** on your Case Type.



All Categories and Case Types can be found in the appellate or trial court Configuration Standards on [www.efile.illinoiscourts.gov](http://www.efile.illinoiscourts.gov). Note, these standards do not apply to Cook County. Ask court staff if you need help with Location, Category, or Case Type.

5. Click **Save Changes**.



The screenshot shows the 'Case Information' form. The 'Location' dropdown is set to 'Douglas County'. The 'Category' dropdown is set to 'Dissolution'. The 'Case Type' dropdown is set to 'Dissolution of Marriage or Legal Separation - \$207.00'. At the bottom right, the 'Save Changes' button is highlighted with a red box.



You have successfully entered the Case Information for a New Case.



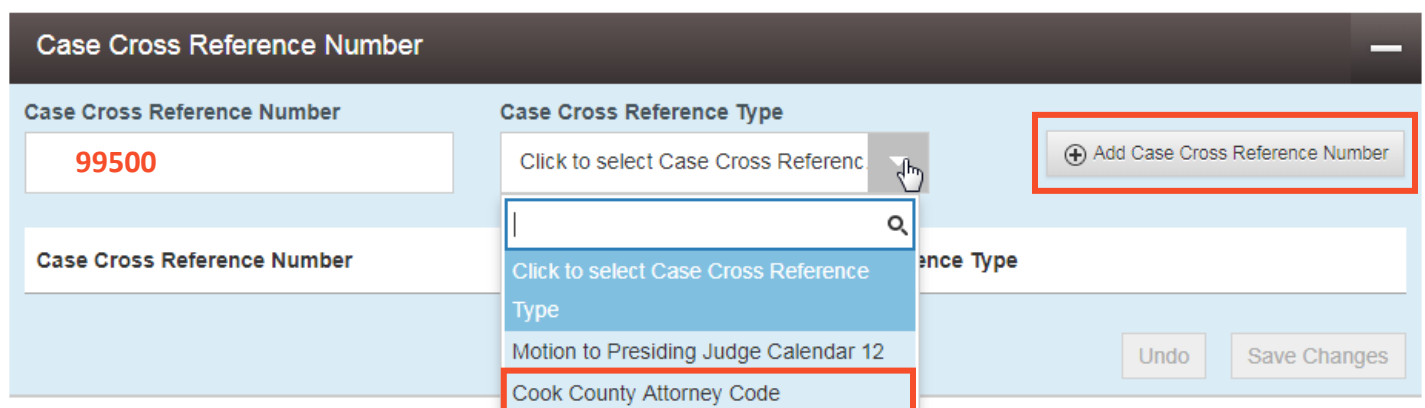
### Important note for Cook County ONLY - Case Cross Reference Number

- There is one additional part of case information that applies only in Cook County. Once you hit Save Changes, a pop up box will appear. Read the message. Click **Done** and the new field will appear.

**Attention Cook County Filers!**

If you are an attorney, Insert Cook County Attorney Code Number in the case cross reference number field and Click 'Add'; if you are filing a motion, use the case cross reference field to add the word 'motion' and choose the motion type from the drop down and click 'Add'.

**Done**

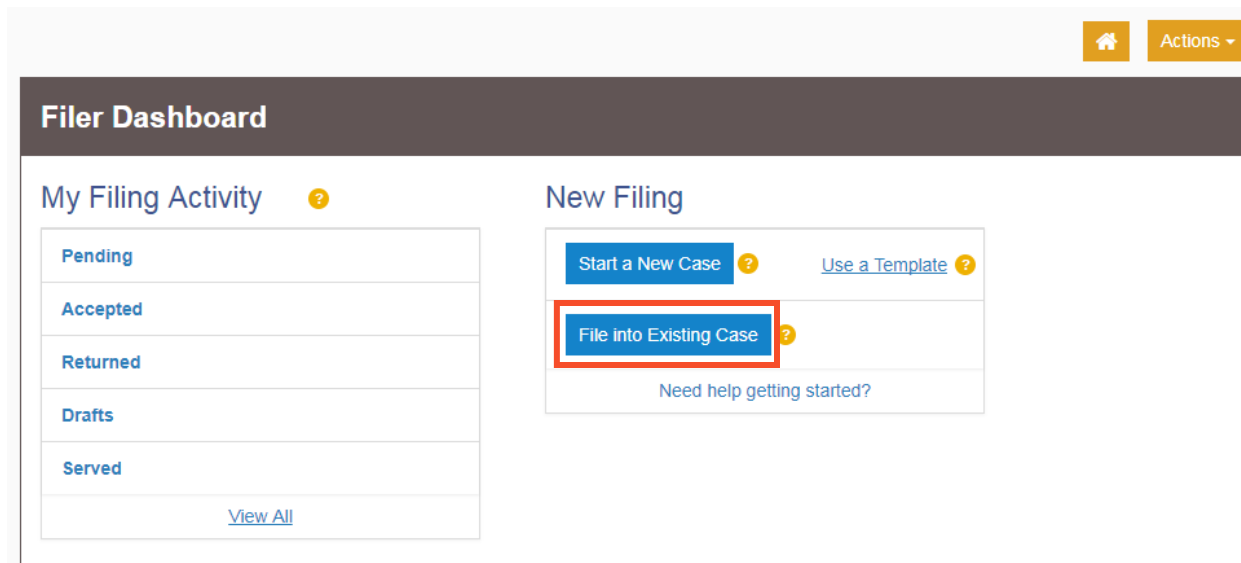


The screenshot shows the 'Case Cross Reference Number' form. The 'Case Cross Reference Number' field contains '99500'. The 'Case Cross Reference Type' dropdown menu is open, showing options: 'Click to select Case Cross Reference Type', 'Motion to Presiding Judge Calendar 12', and 'Cook County Attorney Code'. The 'Cook County Attorney Code' option is highlighted with a red box. The 'Add Case Cross Reference Number' button is also highlighted with a red box. At the bottom right, the 'Save Changes' button is visible.

- Even though you are representing yourself, you **MUST** fill out this section.
  - Type in **99500** in the Case Cross Reference Number box.
  - Click on Case Cross Reference Type drop down menu and select **Cook County Attorney Code**.
  - Click **Add Case Cross Reference Number**.
  - Click **Save Changes**.
- If you are trying to file a motion, type the word **Motion** in the Case Cross Reference Number box and select **Motion** in the drop down menu.
  - Click **Add Case Cross Reference Number**, then click **Save Changes**.

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## ➡ Existing Case – Click File Into Existing Case

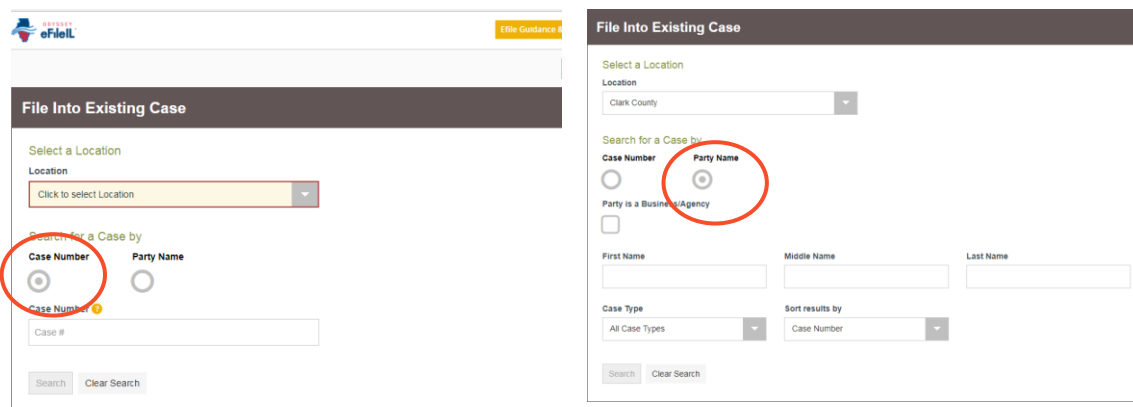


The screenshot shows the 'Filer Dashboard' with two main sections: 'My Filing Activity' and 'New Filing'. Under 'My Filing Activity', there are buttons for 'Pending', 'Accepted', 'Returned', 'Drafts', and 'Served', along with a 'View All' link. The 'New Filing' section contains two buttons: 'Start a New Case' and 'File into Existing Case'. The 'File into Existing Case' button is highlighted with a red rectangular box. There is also a 'Use a Template' link and a 'Need help getting started?' link.

## ➡ Choose the Location

1. The Location means where the case was filed.
  - a. If you are filing as part of a case at the trial court, select the County where the case was filed.
    - i. For Cook County, the Location will contain the County, Division, and District. More information can be found above.
  - b. If you are filing as part of a case on appeal, select the Appellate District or Supreme Court where the case was filed. Please see the E-filing Guides specific to Civil Appeals for more information about how to e-file in those courts.
2. Click in the **Location box** and a drop down menu will appear. Scroll through until you find the correct location and **click** on it.

## ➡ Choose to search by Case Number or Party Name



The left screenshot shows the 'File Into Existing Case' form with a 'Location' dropdown menu and search options for 'Case Number' and 'Party Name'. The 'Party Name' radio button is circled in red. The right screenshot shows the search results page with the 'Party Name' radio button also circled in red.

Decide if you want to search by Case Number or by Party Name and **click** that button. NOTE: Party Name searches are not available in Cook County.

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## 1. Case Number

- a. The Case Number can be found on the upper right corner of any court documents you've received about the case.
- b. The Case Number should be entered in a specific format, with no extra spaces or dashes.
  - i. Use the full 4 digits of the year, capital letters, remaining numbers
    1. For example: document says 15-d-1234, you would search 2015D1234
    2. If the case does not appear, ask court staff about specific format for your court
  - ii. *Exception:* Cook County cases in Civil Division that have the letter "M" in the case number, do NOT use the letter M when searching.
    1. For example: document says 18-M4-123456, you should search 20184123456
- c. Type in the number and click **Search**.

## 2. Party Name

- a. If you cannot find the Case Number, you can search by Party Name instead.
- b. You must enter a first and last name and then click **Search**.
- c. You can search by your name if you are a party in the case.

## 3. After you select Search, a list of cases will appear.

- a. If no cases appear, double check the case number and contact your local court to confirm the case number format.

07-SC-01010	Peoria County	OSF HEALTHCARE SY...	Confession & Judgment	Actions ▾
07-SC-01917	Peoria County	T-H PROFESSIONAL A...	Confession & Judgment	Actions ▾
10-MH-00061	Peoria County	IN THE MATTER OF vs ...	Petition to Administer Tr...	Actions ▾
12-SC-00010	Peoria County	FULLER, CHESTER C v...	Confession & Judgment	Actions ▾
71-D-03298	Peoria County	SMITH CAROLE vs SMI...	Custody Hearing	Actions ▾
84-LM-05664	Peoria County	JOHN SMITH vs DEREK...	Arbitration & Award	Actions ▾
87-LM-00015	Peoria County	CECU vs SMITH JOHN ...	Arbitration & Award	Actions ▾

## 4. Click on the Actions arrow to the right of the case information.

- a. Click on **File Into Case**.

### Important Note

- Not all existing cases have been put into the efile system yet. If your existing case does not show up after both a Case Number and Party Name search, you can still file into the case if you get the message below. Click on **File into an existing case**, then you will need to enter the information manually as if it were a new case. See the instructions above.

**If your case is not listed above, you are attempting to efile into a case that has yet to receive an electronic submission and the case is not searchable from the court's case management system.**

You are still able to file into this case, but you will first be required to manually input the case information. Any additional filings on this case will not require the manual data entry.

[File into an existing case](#) 

- If your case is not found and this message does not display, ask court staff to verify the case number and your next steps.



**You have successfully selected the Case Information for an Existing Case.**

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