

The e-filing contemplated in this SOP is presently restricted to cases filed by the Government, MACT Appeals filed by the Insurance Companies, Arbitration Petitions, Commercial Cause Suits, Direct Tax Writ Petitions and cases filed under the Special Court (Trial of Offences Relating to Transactions in Securities) Act, 1992.

Interim e-filing SOP V. 1.0 (w.e.f 01.01.2022)

1. Registration of an Advocate or Party-in-Person (“Registrant”) on the portal of High Court of Bombay is a must before filing any case. Advocates may register themselves here on the official website of High Court of Bombay [here](#). Without registration, no one can e-file any case or replies or documents.
2. Unless the Mobile number and email address of a Registrant as available in Case Information System (CIS), it is not possible to register on the e-filing portal. The e-Filing link on the official website of High Court of Bombay will redirect the user to e-filing portal.
3. Prospective Registrant(s) can access e-filing portal by clicking the link for e-filing appearing on the official website of High Court Bombay as shown [here](#).
4. Without registration, no Party-in-person can e-file any case or reply or document. There are two ways for a party to establish his identity during the process of registration (a) by uploading

documents establishing proof of identity (b) by paperless process using electronic identification. (eKYL Aadhar based)

5. The email ID and mobile number of a Registrant shall be treated as his/her registered email address for sending or receiving documents, notification, alerts. Similarly registered mobile number shall be used for sending SMS notifications.
6. All the original typed text material including Plaints, Petitions, Appeals, Interim Applications, Affidavits in the foregoing (“Pleadings”), Exhibits thereto will be prepared electronically using the following formatting style:
 - a. Paper size: A-4 (white)
 - b. Top Margin: 1.5”
 - c. Bottom Margin: 1.5”
 - d. Left Margin: 1.75”
 - e. Right Margin: 1.0”
 - f. Alignment: Justified
 - g. Font: Times New Roman and fonts permitted by practice note.
 - h. Font size: 14
 - i. Line spacing: 1.5
 - j. If any document is typed in a local language in Trial Courts, it must be in prepared using Unicode Font and size 14

7. At present, only text (i.e. not audio visual material or images) document(s) may be attached/e-filed with the pleadings. A scanned document must be converted into Optical Character Recognition (OCR) searchable Portable Document Format (PDF) or PDF/A using any PDF converter or inbuilt PDF conversion plug-in provided in the software. PDF/A is the preferred format. Generally, all word processors have export to PDF facility, and it is recommended to make PDF using the same wherein PDF/A output can be ensured.
8. The PDF document shall be digitally signed either by the parties and/or by their Advocate. Digital signatures shall be appended at such places on the PDF document as prescribed. If neither the party nor the Advocate who has been engaged possesses a digital signature, a printout of only the page or pages physically signed by the party concerned and/or their Advocate are permitted to be scanned and uploaded. The same procedure is to be followed for pleadings.
9. E-filing authentication page is provided under e-filing portal which gives details of the documents as per the contents of the index filled in by user. Registrants who possess valid digital signatures may download authentication page and upload it after signing it digitally using the digital signature. Notwithstanding other methods of preservation of records, e-filed documents shall be identified in future by the hash value mentioned in the authentication page. If any Registrant does not possess his or her

own valid digital signature, a free facility of eSign (UID or VID based signature) is provided.

10. Text documents and scanned documents other than the authentication page should be merged as a single OCR searchable PDF file and should be book-marked as per the Master Index, duly approved by the Registry.

11. Once e-filing is accepted, the filing number or lodging number will be notified to the Advocate or litigant in person by SMS and/or email.

12. Document File Name Standards

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

- i. A quotation mark (")
- ii. A number sign/Pound (#)
- iii. Per cent (%)
- iv. Ampersand (&)
- v. Asterisk (*)
- vi. Colon (:)
- vii. Angle brackets (less than, greater than) (<>)
- viii. A question mark (?)
- ix. Backslash (\)
- x. Forward slash (/)
- xi. Braces (left and right) ({ })
- xii. Pipe (|)
- xiii. A tilde (~)

- xiv. The period (.) character used consecutively in the middle of the file name or at the beginning or end of the file name.
- xv. File names should not exceed 45 characters in length, including spaces. Single space must be counted as one character each.

13. On-line e-filed documents must not be watermarked, hyperlinked, or encrypted. The e-filed documents shall not contain any images or embedded videos, GIFs or any other Audio, Video or audio-visual files PDF form fields, java script elements, 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.

14. Citations i.e., copies of precedents shall not form part of the pleadings or annexure, unless citation is relevant subject matter of the lis. Citations i.e., copies of cited authorities/precedents shall be separately filed as and when necessary.

15. Court fee must be paid electronically with Government Receipt and Account System (GRAS). GRAS payment system is already integrated with e-filing portal.

16. Originals of the documents, certified copies that are scanned and digitally signed by the Registrant(s) at the time of e-filing should

be preserved for production or inspection as may be required by a Registrant, Registry or Bench for verification or removal of doubts.

17. The registry may make use of virtual counters with video linkage for quick verification any scanned or typed document e-filed cases.

18. Signed vakalatnama(s), affirmed and notarized/attested affidavit and any other document the authenticity of which is likely to be questioned should be preserved at least for two years till after the final disposal of the case, after all challenges.

19. The responsibility of producing the originals and proving their genuineness shall be of the party who has electronically filed scanned copies of the document.

20. Wherever limitation/time limits apply, it will be the responsibility of the party concerned to ensure that the filing is carried out well before the cut-off date and time. The date of e-filing will be taken as the date when the pleading is electronically received in the Registry within the prescribed time on any working day. For computing the time at which e-filing is made, Indian Standard Time (IST) will apply.

21. On-line e-filing carried out after 16:30 hours on any day will be treated as the date which follows the actual filing date provided it is a court working day. Cases/Response e-filed on a day

declared as gazetted holiday or on a day when the court is closed will be regarded as having been filed on the next working day. For the computation of limitation, on-line e-filing shall be subject to the same legal regime as applicable to physical filing, save and except as provided herein above.

22.The facility for on-line e-filing through the web portal shall be available twenty-four hours of each day, subject to uptime and maintenance downtime or other exigencies. Where on-line e-filing is not possible for any of the reasons set out above, parties can either approach the Designated filing Counters for e-filing during work hours in any case before 16:30 hours on court working days. If limitation is expiring and at filing counters also e-filing help cannot be rendered, the Registrant may be permitted to file a case by tendering a soft copy on Pen Drive. No exemption from limitation shall be permitted on the ground of a failure of the web based on-line e-filing facility.

23.The e-filing by a Registrant may be rejected if the protocol mandated by this SOP or practice directions or Rules in force is not followed.

24.In all cases if the respondent is not registered in CIS and no email ID is disclosed, a that respondent cannot be compelled to accept service in digitised form. In such case, the Registrant shall serve the respondent with physical copies of the pleadings in addition to offering a soft copy.

25. The Registry shall mark the objections in filed cases through CIS which will be notified in ordinary course by email/SMS and website to the Registrant. Generally, only after the objections are cleared, the case will be processed for listing and the Registrant will be informed by email/SMS.
26. Scrutiny and compliance with objections in any pleading e-filing shall only be by online mode only. If interaction is inevitable in such cases virtual counters with video linkage facility shall be used as and when activated.
27. It shall be mandatory for Government Pleader(s)/Prosecution(s) to register themselves as Advocate(s) before they submit information as to their appointment as Government Pleader or Prosecutor. The office of Advocate General shall supply information of all Government Advocates appointed Similarly; office Additional Solicitor General shall supply details of appointments of Central Government Advocates along with details as to bench.
28. Each Government Pleader shall disclose registered email address for accepting notifications, service, documents, communications. Office of the Government Pleader shall have one email ID for serving copies in cases where Note of Appearance is not filed Copies served on such registered email address shall be treated as valid service on State or Central Government, as may be the case.

29. Practice note defining sequence and chronology of documents and manner of pagination, manner of filing amendment shall be separately issued.
30. The registry may send soft copies of the pleading from the dedicated mail address along with a copy of notice/writ to the Court below with verification mechanism to ensure integrity of the dispatched soft copies. If required, soft copies shall be printed at Court effecting service, whereupon addressee court shall affix its seal on the notice/writ so received and shall serve copies on the respondents/noticees. A copy of the report of service shall be uploaded as reply to the e-mail forwarding notices/writs which, unless required, shall be treated as sufficient proof of service without requirement of physically signed hard copy of report of service.
31. A copy served at the registered mail address of parties or advocates at the time of e-filing response or document through the sharing facility available on the e-filing portal shall be sufficient service on registered advocates or registered litigants of that case.
32. Record of orders passed in an e-filed case, shall, as far as possible, be kept in digitised form. However, at the request of parties certified copies with seal and signature can be issued in hard copy subject to payment of charges to be specified.

33. As far as Government is concerned, digitally signed copy forwarded on registered mail address shall be sufficient to act upon on the order of the Court for executing directions or for similar purposes.
34. All communication of orders of the High Court Registry to registered Government Departments shall be in soft copy only from the dedicated/registered mail address of the Court and to registered mail address of the Government Department.
35. For cases which are e-filed, records of the Trial Court or Appellate Court shall be made available in soft copies and registry shall ensure that Courts transmit such record in soft copies duly indexed and paginated.
36. In any case wherein originating pleadings are e-filed, any Registrants filing any pleading or document shall submit soft copies through e-filing portal or send a soft copy on dedicated mail address. [Registrants filing soft copies in addition to filing in hard copies shall ensure and make statement to the effect that soft copy so filed is in conformity with the hard copies filed through filing counters. Registry may withhold such filing in the event it is found that soft copy is not in conformity with hard copy. (Blank pages overleaf appearing in hard copies need not be scanned to match with hardcopies).]

37. Farad sheets shall be digitally maintained in the CIS and every Farad sheet shall be digitally signed by Personal Assistants to the Hon'ble Judges. e-Farad sheet should have an Index and dates mentioned in the e-Farad sheet should match dates of listing shown in CIS.

[Facility to provide for inspection of e-filed cases is being separately developed and will be notified.]

This SOP only addresses the technical aspects and requirements of e-filing. It does not extend to substantive matters such as evidence.

The SOP is subject to the periodical revision and to the framing of formal Rules.

Published by order.

Sd/-

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