

HOW TO FILE A CERTIFICATE OF COURT FILING BY MAIL

NOTE: If there are any words or terms used in these instructions that you do not understand, please visit Illinois Legal Aid Online at ilao.info/glossary. For more information about going to court, including how to fill out and file forms, call or text Illinois Court Help at 833-411-1121 or go to ilcourthelp.gov.

Additional resources are available to help self-represented litigants at: ilcourts.info/appl-resources.

What is a *Certificate of Court Filing By Mail*?

- A *Certificate of Court Filing By Mail* is a form you use to show how you filed a document by mail with the court clerk.
- The *Certificate of Court Filing By Mail* form is **not** filed separately. You must attach the appropriate *Certificate of Court Filing By Mail* form to the document you are filing (for example, if you are exempt from e-filing and you are filing by mail a *Docketing Statement* with the appellate court).
- If you are e-filing or filing in person at the clerk's office, you will **not** use the *Certificate of Court Filing By Mail* form. Most people will not use this form because generally forms must be e-filed.

When do I need to use the *Certificate of Court Filing By Mail* form?

You may **only** use the *Certificate of Court Filing By Mail* if you are either:

- **Representing yourself, do not have to e-file (exempt), and are filing by mail:** Use the *Certificate of Court Filing By Mail – Rule 12(b)(5)* form. Attach it to the document you are filing with the clerk's office for your appeal. **OR**
- **In a jail or prison and you are representing yourself:** Use the *Certificate of Court Filing By Mail – Rule 12(b)(6)* form. Attach it to the document you are filing with the clerk's office for your appeal.

Where can I find the forms I need?

You can find the forms at: ilcourts.info/forms.

What costs will I need to pay to file a *Certificate of Court Filing By Mail*?

- There is no fee for filing a *Certificate of Court Filing By Mail* with the clerk's office.
- However, you must pay any fee relating to the document you are filing. For example, the *Notice of Appeal*, *Docketing Statement*, and *Appearance* have fees for filing them. When you file any of those forms, along with your *Certificate of Court Filing By Mail* form, you must pay the filing fee.

- If you cannot afford to pay the filing fee, you can ask the court to file for free or at a reduced cost by filing the *Application for Waiver of Court Fees*. This is a separate set of forms you can find at: ilcourts.info/forms.

How do I fill out and file the *Certificate of Court Filing By Mail* form?

Step 1: Complete the applicable *Certificate of Court Filing By Mail* form.

- Choose the correct form for your situation. To use these forms you must be either:
 1. Exempt from e-filing and you are filing by mail **or**
 2. In jail or prison and representing yourself.
- Write the name of the document you are filing with the court.
- Write the name and address of the clerk's office you are sending the documents to. Generally, you'll use this form to file documents for your appeal with either the appellate court or Illinois Supreme Court. There might be instances where you use this form to file documents with the trial court that decided your case.
- Write the location and date and time in which you deposited the documents into the mail or, if you are in jail or prison into the legal mail system of the jail or prison.
- If you are in jail or prison, you must also include the name and address of the prison or jail you are in, as well as your inmate ID number.
- You must sign and fully complete the certification under the Code of Civil Procedure, [735 ILCS 5/1-109](http://ilcs.legis.gov/ILCS/5/1-109), on the page.

Step 2: Mail the forms to the clerk of the court you are filing in.

- Mail the document you wish to file with the court clerk and the *Certificate of Court Filing By Mail* form.

Step 3: Send the forms to the other parties in the case.

- You must send your documents to the other parties in the case. If any party has a lawyer, you must send the documents to the lawyer.
- There is a Proof of Delivery section in every form set that you will use to show how you sent the documents to the other parties. Do **not** use the *Certificate of Court Filing By Mail* form for this purpose.