

Practice Direction 0 COVID 19 (Electronic Filing)

This Practice Direction is issued pursuant to section 49(1) of the Local Court Act, section 53(1)(b) of the Youth Justice Act and section 31(3) of the Work Health Administration Act and will commence from 30 March 2020.

1. The Northern Territory Local Court is introducing measures to limit unnecessary personal interactions during the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. This Practice Direction provides for electronic filing in all Local Court Jurisdictions.

Electronic Filing

3. Any document which is to be filed or lodged with the Local Court can be filed or lodged by email to the relevant registry.
4. The email addresses for the purpose of this Practice Direction are:
 - 4.1 Darwin Local Court (Civil Registry) – DLC.CivilRegistry@nt.gov.au
 - 4.2 Darwin Local Court (Criminal Registry) - DLC.CriminalRegistry@nt.gov.au
 - 4.3 Darwin Local Court (Domestic and Personal Violence matters) - DLC.DV@nt.gov.au
 - 4.4 Darwin Childrens Court – Darwin.ChildrensCourt@nt.gov.au
 - 4.5 Alice Springs Local Court (Civil Registry) - ASLC.CivilRegistry@nt.gov.au
 - 4.6 Alice Springs Local Court (Criminal Registry) - ASLC.CriminalRegistry@nt.gov.au
 - 4.7 Katherine Local Court – KatherineLocalCourt@nt.gov.au
5. Documents being lodged electronically must:
 - 5.1 be attached as a single document; and
 - 5.2 be labelled with the name or adequate description of the document being filed; and
 - 5.3 be a text searchable PDF, JPEG or TIFF document with no viewing, printing or copying restrictions; and
 - 5.4 be paginated and not more than 25 megabytes in size; and
 - 5.5 have 300 dots per inch resolution with a black and white setting; and
 - 5.6 not contain a virus or malware.

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6. If the document contains a hyperlink to an external source, the content of the source is not part of the document.
7. If the document is an affidavit which contains annexures, each annexure must have a bookmark applied to the annexure certificate before it is uploaded.
8. If a document does not comply with this Practice Direction for any reason, a Registrar may:
 - 8.1 notify the user filing the document and request that the user file the document in a different, or specified, format or manner (including directions for the filing of hard copies); or
 - 8.2 approve the filing of the document.
9. Any email sent to the Court for the purposes of filing electronically must contain the following:
 - 9.1 confirmation that the document is emailed for the purpose of electronic filing; and
 - 9.2 the court file number (unless the documents being filed are an originating process and a court file number has not yet been allocated); and
 - 9.3 the name of the document/s being filed; and
 - 9.4 detail of the party seeking to file the document, including preferred phone and email contact details.
10. Multiple documents for filing may be attached to a single email, provided that each document to be filed is individually identified and listed separately in the body of the email.
11. Documents filed electronically will be taken to be filed at the date and time shown on the email received by the Court Registry, however documents received outside Registry hours (8.00 am – 4.00 pm ACST) or on weekends or public holidays will be taken to be received at 8.00 am on the next business day.
12. It is the responsibility of the court user to ensure the successful transmission of any documents being filed electronically.
13. When filing electronically, only 1 copy of each document should be filed and if a document has been received and accepted by the Registry, it is unnecessary for any paper copies to be provided to the Registry.

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14. Nothing in this Practice Direction alters parties' obligations for service and the form of service as prescribed by the *Local Court (Civil Jurisdiction) Rules 1998* and *Work Health Court Rules 1999*.
15. Upon the commencement of this Practice Direction electronic filing will be mandatory for legal practitioners.
16. Given the potential risk to staff and the community, in the event a self-represented party wishes to file any material directly with the Court, prior approval and confirmation of the arrangements for same will required. Such requests should be submitted via email or telephone to the relevant registry on the email address set out at paragraph 4.
17. All payments for filings will need to be via credit card over the phone to the relevant registry, or via cheque.
18. If a document is too large to be filed electronically by email, for example a large brief of evidence being filed pursuant to s105D of the Local Court (Criminal Procedure) Act, the relevant registry should be contacted for arrangements to be made for filing by a USB device.

Issued by Chief Judge Morris on 26 March 2020.