



THE PROVINCIAL COURT
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Effective Date: *02 August 2024*

FAM 10

PRACTICE DIRECTION

ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES ON FAMILY FORMS AND ORDERS AND FILING OF FAMILY ORDERS

Purpose

The purpose of this Practice Direction is to clarify: (1) the use of electronic signatures on forms* and orders made under the *Family Law Act*, S.B.C. 2011, c. 25 (FLA), *Child, Family and Community Service Act*, R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 46 (CFCSA) and other child protection laws, *Family Maintenance Enforcement Act*, R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 127 (FMEA), *Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act*, S.B.C. 2002, c. 29, and *Adult Guardianship Act*, R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 6. (collectively “Family Form or Order”); and (2) the method by which counsel must file Family Orders.

* For the purpose of this Practice Direction, “form” means a court form where a signature is required, but does not include a Financial Statement or an Affidavit.

Application

This practice direction applies to all court registries in the Province.

Directions

1. A party or counsel may use an electronic signature (in lieu of handwritten signature) to sign a Family Form or Order. An electronic signature includes a digital image of a handwritten signature or a signature drawn in digital ink (by using, for example, a stylus, mouse, or trackpad), but does not include a typewritten name or typewritten certificate-based digital signature.
2. If a party or counsel uses an electronic signature to sign a Family Form or Order, they should **only file the electronically signed** version of a Family Form or Order at the applicable [court registry](#). They should **not** additionally file a copy of a Family Form or Order with their handwritten signature.

3. In order to facilitate the more timely processing of Family Orders, where counsel is required to file a Family Order, they must do so by email to the applicable [court registry](#) as follows:

a. The Family Order must:

- i. be in PDF format¹;
- ii. not be password protected or encrypted;
- iii. follow the naming convention set out below; and
- iv. be individually submitted by a separate email (i.e., one Family Order per PDF file per email).

b. The subject line for emails to the applicable court registry attaching a PDF Family Order for filing must also follow the naming convention set out below.

Naming Convention for PDF Family Order & Email Submission Subject Line
LOCATION-FILE NUMBER-STYLE OF PROCEEDINGS (SHORT)-DATE ORDERED-ORDER TYPE-JUDGE'S FIRST INITIAL & LAST NAME
<i>As examples:</i>
Kelowna-12345-Doe v. Doe-June 1, 2023-FLA ORDER-S. Wishart
Kelowna-12345-Doe v. Doe-June 1, 2023-CFCSA ORDER-S. Wishart

History of Practice Direction

- Original practice direction effective May 17, 2021.
- Revised December 13, 2023: adds section 3 regarding filing of a Family Order by email and consequential amendments to title and purpose of Practice Direction.
- August 2, 2024: "Purpose" updated in light of the Provincial Court (Snuw'uy'ulhtst tu Quw'utsun Mustimuhw u' tu Shhw'a'luqwa'a' i' Smun'eem) [Laws of the Cowichan People for Families and Children] Rules coming into effect.

I make this practice direction pursuant to my authority under the *Provincial Court Act*, R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 379, Rule 9(19) of the *Provincial Court (Adult Guardianship) Rules*, and Rule 160 of the *Provincial Court Family Rules*, B.C. Reg. 120/2020.

Melissa Gillespie
Chief Judge
Provincial Court of British Columbia

¹ For reference: [3 Ways to Convert a File Into PDF - wikiHow](#).