

Senior Courts Costs Office Guidance for Court of Protection Bills and the Document Upload Centre.

These notes should be read in conjunction with the DUC Professional User Guide and Practice Direction 510- The electronic working pilot scheme.

Due to Covid 19 the DUC has been adopted by the SCCO to give their users the option of uploading supporting papers electronically. The Costs Officers are happy to accept all supporting papers for Court of Protection bills in this way, provided that they meet the guidelines set out below;

Can I upload papers via CE-File instead of the DUC?

The DUC is a separate system from CE-file. They are not linked in any way.

The Bill of costs, N258B request form and court order/s giving authority for the bill to be assessed must be uploaded via CE-file.

Please do not upload your supporting papers via CE-file, as we are not able to accept them in this way. If you wish to upload your supporting papers electronically, you must use the DUC. If you upload your supporting papers to CE-file instead of the DUC we will have to reject them.

Once I've signed up to the DUC, is it compulsory to use it for every filing? Do I still have the option to submit a hard copies instead?

Use of the DUC is not compulsory. Once you have the link allowing you to use the DUC, you can use it as much or as little as you wish. You can use it for every bill, some bills - or not use it at all.

However, if you intend to use the DUC, we need to know which bills you will be using it for.

- **If your firm wishes to become a Permanent DUC User (ie. every bill filed by the firm will use the DUC):**

If your firm intend to use the DUC for every bill it files, please email us, asking to be added to our list of permanent DUC users. Firms on this list are automatically assumed to be using the DUC and do not need to inform us each time they wish to use it. Once we have received your email, we will send you a reply confirming that you have been added to the list of permanent users.

- **If your firm wishes to be a Partial DUC User (ie. use the DUC for some bills and provide hard copies for others)**

If your firm is not on the list of permanent users, we will assume that you are sending all your papers by post. If you want to use the DUC for a particular bill, you will therefore need to clearly state this in the 'filing comments' section when lodging your bill on CE-File. (The 'filing comments' section is found at the top of the 'Filing information' page. Please do not confuse this with 'document comments' at the bottom of the same page).

If you are a Partial User, it is essential that the clerk reviewing your bill filing is aware that you wish to use the DUC. If the filing does not state that you are uploading documents to the DUC, we will assume that you are submitting them by post and will put the file in storage to await the arrival of physical papers. This will delay the assessment of your bill.

When should I upload my papers?

You should only upload your papers once your bill has been accepted. As with physical papers, electronic files should be submitted within 28 days of receiving the acceptance notification via CE-File.

What format should I present my files in?

The uploaded files should be in the following format

- The file must be named with the SCCO case reference e.g. SC-2020-COP-001234 and the protected party's surname. If the bill is for General Management, please include the period covered.
- All documents should be in chronological order from the oldest to the newest. Ideally, you should include an index and hyperlink.
- If you upload your papers as more than one file, each file should be labelled so that the contents can be clearly identified by the Costs Officer e.g. SC-2020-COP-001234 file 1- Jan-Mar, SC-2020-COP-001234 file 2 – Apr-May.
- The OPG102, OPG105, the client care letter and any invoices for disbursements or counsels' fees should appear at the start of the file.

When I filed my bill on CMS, I intended to send my papers by post. I now want to use the DUC instead. Can I do this?

If your bill has already been filed and accepted and you decide at a later date to upload your supporting papers to the DUC, rather than sending them as a hard copy, you need to let us know, so that we can deal with this accordingly.

Please send an email to the SCCO mailbox scco@justice.gov.uk informing us that your bill has been accepted and that you have decided to file the papers via the DUC, rather than as a hard copy. Please supply the 18-digit submission number so that we can identify the bill in question.

How do I register to use the DUC?

If you would like to sign up to the Document Upload Centre for submission of your supporting papers for COP bills please send an email request to;

Christine.leggett@justice.gov.uk

Please include details of the email address you would like to be linked to the DUC. You will then be sent an invite/link with further instructions.