

---

# Tennessee Judicial Information Systems (TJIS)

## CIVIL

---

Administrative Office of the Courts  
Information Technology Services Division  
Nashville City Center, Suite 600  
511 Union Street  
Nashville, TN 37219  
1.800.448.7980

---

### Filing Instructions:

**Original filings** are defined as any new case filed during the reporting period or any case received for a change of venue from another county or court. All appeals from a lower court are classified as original actions.

**Reopened filings** are defined as any case that has previously been filed and disposed, but has subsequent action.

**For each docket number, there can only be one reopened or original case pending at any given time.**

**Please use the online fillable forms for additions or corrections:**

<https://www.tncourts.gov/courts/court-clerks/clerks-manuals-reporting>

### Line-by-Line Instructions for Filing Cover Sheet:

A separate coversheet should be used for each case number.

Item	Instruction
1. Location Code	Fill in the designated location code. <i>(Refer to location code list in the Appendix of the manual for the correct code. Contact the AOC if a location cannot be found.)</i>

2. Court	<p>Check the appropriate box.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Circuit Civil</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Chancery</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Probate</li> </ul> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Probate should only be checked in counties where one of the following conditions exist:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There is a separately elected probate clerk,</li> <li>2. There is a county clerk with probate jurisdiction; or</li> <li>3. The county has a separately established probate court.</li> </ol> </div>
3. Docket No.	<p><b>Original:</b> The docket number assigned to the particular case.</p> <p><b>Reopened:</b> Use the <i>original docket number</i> for reopened cases.</p> <p><b>* Three-Judge Panel:</b>  Reported as  docket number + Identifier  Identifier A = Chief  Identifier B or C = Panel</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Most counter suits are filed under the original open case and should not be reported separately as another filing due to the original case still being open.</p> </div>
4. Filing Date	<p><b>For Original:</b> Date at which time the civil case is physically filed and docketed with the clerk, and the cover sheet is completed.</p> <p><b>For Reopened:</b> It is very important that the correct filing date is entered on the coversheet (e.g., the date the petition to reopen the case is filed). This will help distinguish the reopened case from the original case or from previous reopening of the same case.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><b>Note:</b>  Use the filing date for the reopening (the date the <b>petition to reopen the case</b> is filed).  <b>Do not use the original filing date when reopening a case.</b></p> </div>
5. Plaintiffs / Defendants/ Attorneys	<p>Currently this information is not required. The AOC does not enter this information. However, we are not removing it from the coversheet because it may be required in the near future.</p>

6. General Sessions Appeal	Check the box if the case is appealed to circuit or chancery court from general sessions court, by either an appeal or transfer.
7. Type of Suit (Case type) <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Only one type of suit should be checked.</p> <p>Choose the case type that most closely fits the case.</p> </div>	<p><b><u>Original Filings:</u></b> Check the appropriate case type under one of the three categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>General civil</b> If the appropriate case type is not listed, please use Miscellaneous General Civil (581).</li> <li>▪ <b>Other Domestic relations</b> If the appropriate case type is not listed, please use Other Domestic Relations (401).</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Reopened Filings:</u></b> Check the appropriate case type for the reopened matter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If the appropriate case type is not listed, please use “Other” (551).</li> </ul> <p>See case type definitions on pages 3-8</p>

## Type of Suit (Case type) Definitions:

### Original Filings:

- General Civil
- Domestic Relations
- Other

Choose the type that most closely fits the case.

General Civil	
Item	Instruction
451 Medical Malpractice	Includes all cases involving action to recover money as compensation or indemnity for personal injury or death due to medical malpractice. Medical malpractice is defined as negligence in performing medical professional duties or failure to exercise an accepted degree of medical professional skill or learning while rendering medical services which result in injury, loss, or damage. Defendants in such cases may include, but are not limited to: doctors, hospitals, nurses, EMTs, psychiatrists, psychologists, therapists and medical technicians.

461 Contract/Debt	Includes any action involving agreements or contracts (expressed or implied). This includes recovery of money for services performed, sales of goods, money loaned, damages for performance of simple contracts (expressed or implied), or liens by a builder or furnisher.
462 Specific Performance	Where damages would be an inadequate compensation for the breach of an agreement, the contractor or vendor will be compelled to perform specifically what he has agreed to do. Examples include: 1) agreements in writing to buy or sell land; 2) contracts to execute or renew leases; 3) contracts to execute a mortgage; 4) contracts to insure; and 5) contracts for chattels of special value. If a payment for personal injury or death is involved, it should be coded under 451- Medical Malpractice or 471- Other damages/Torts, rather than 462.
471 Other Damages/Torts	Includes all cases other than medical malpractice involving action to recover money as compensation or indemnity for personal injury or death. For statistical purposes only, a tort is an injury or wrong committed against a person by a party who either did something he or she was obligated not to do, or failed to do something that he or she was obligated to do. (NOTE: Cases claiming money for property damage or for loss of right should be filed under the appropriate case type or 581-Miscellaneous General Civil.)
481 Real Estate Matter	Includes all matters pertaining to land, including contracts for the sale of land, suits dealing with ownership, foreclosure proceedings, easements, water rights, rights of way, boundary disputes, condemnation proceedings, and partitions.
491 Workers' Compensation	Includes all cases involving action to determine the right to compensation under the Worker's Compensation Act. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;">Only workers compensation lawsuits filed with injury prior to 7/1/2014 now go through the courts.</div>
501 Probate	Includes all cases involving the administration of decedents' estates.
511 Juvenile Court Appeal	All appeals from juvenile court.

513 Appeal from Administrative Hearing	Includes judicial review of a state or local administrative agency proceeding, other than those that are applicable to 514 Three-Judge Hearing.
514 Three-Judge Panel Hearing	Includes the state, department or agency of the state, or a state official acting in his or her official capacity is a defendant in a complaint that: (a) challenges the constitutionality of a state statute, including a statute that apportions or redistricts state legislative or congressional districts; or an executive order; or an administrative rule or regulation; and includes a claim for declaratory judgment of injunctive relief. (See SC Rule 54.)
571 Conservatorship	Cases in which a person (conservator) is lawfully invested with the power and charged with the duty of taking care of the property of another person who is considered by the court as incapable of managing his own affairs.
572 Guardianship	Cases in which a person (guardian) is lawfully invested with the power and charged with the duty of taking care of the rights of another person (ward) who is considered by the court as incapable of caring for himself/herself.
573 Trust	All cases involving the legal possession of real or personal property held by one person for the benefit of another.
581 Miscellaneous General Civil	Includes actions that are not included in any of the other case types. Common examples are: property damage suits; employment discrimination suits; un-liquidated damages; salary suit initiated by a county official; non-domestic relations contempt; tax matters; special remedy; injunctions; writs of mandamus; quo warrant; name change; foreign judgments; minor settlements.

<b>Domestic Relations</b>	
<b>Item</b>	<b>Instruction</b>
361 Paternity	A court action to prove that a person is the father of a child and to enforce support obligations.
362 Legitimation	The making legitimate or lawful that which was not originally so; especially the statutory procedure of legalizing (legitimizing) the status of an illegitimate child.

363 Adoption	Legal process pursuant to state statute in which a child's legal rights and duties toward his/her natural parents are terminated and similar rights and duties toward his/her adoptive parents are substituted.
364 Surrender	Legal processes where a child is given up, whereby the parent or guardian terminates all rights to the child. Also called, Termination of Parental Rights.
371 Divorce with minor Children	Includes all cases involving the termination of a marriage, permanent separation between husband and wife, where there are minor children involved.
372 Divorce without minor Children	Includes all cases involving the termination of a marriage, permanent separation between husband and wife, or annulment where there are no minor children involved.
381 Order of Protection	A petition for orders of temporary protection filed by a person seeking relief from an allegedly violent person, who is currently or formerly a household or family member.
383 Residential Parenting/no Child Support	A petition to set the terms of a residential parenting plan without making modifications to child support. Use when a party is seeking to set custody or visitation without a change to child support.
384 Residential Parenting/Child Support	A petition to set the terms of residential parenting plan and to modify child support. Use when a party is seeking to set custody or visitation and a change to child support.
385 Child Support	A petition to set the terms of a child support agreement. Use when a party is seeking child support alone.
387 Wage Assignment Hearing	A petition for the transfer or assignment in advance of the defendant's wages, generally in connection with a previous judgment or to remove a previously ordered wage assignment.
391 Interstate Support-Incoming	Includes all cases involving child support in which the case is received from another state, including interstate wage assignment affidavits.

392 Interstate Support-Outgoing	Includes all cases involving child support in which the case is sent to another state, including interstate wage assignment affidavits.
401 Other Domestic Relations	Includes domestic cases that do not logically fit into any of the above case types.

<b>Other</b>	
<b>Item</b>	<b>Instruction</b>
382 Contempt	A petition alleging that a defendant has violated an order of court which requires that person in specific and definite language to do or refrain from doing an act or series of acts. A willful disregard for, or disobedience of, a public authority.
541 Judicial Hospitalization	Includes all cases in which a person is considered mentally incompetent or retarded and is hospitalized by judicial decree. Hospitalization is considered to be in the defendant's best interest due to the substantial likelihood of serious harm to themselves or others. It can also be referred to as involuntary civil commitment.

## Reopened Filings:

The FDATE is when the filing was reopened not the original open date.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Instruction</b>
381 Order of Protection	A petition for orders of temporary protection filed by a person seeking relief from an allegedly violent person, who is currently or formerly a household or family member.
382 Contempt	A petition alleging that a defendant has violated an order of court which requires that person in specific and definite language to do or refrain from doing an act or series of acts. A willful disregard for, or disobedience of, a public authority.
383 Residential Parenting/no Child Support	A petition to change the terms of previously ordered residential parenting plan without making modifications to child support. Use when a party is seeking to modify custody or visitation without a change to child support.
384 Residential Parenting/Child Support	A petition to change the terms of previously ordered residential parenting plan with modification to child support. Use when a party is seeking to modify custody or visitation and a change to child support.

385 Child Support	A petition to change the terms of a previously ordered child support agreement. Use when a party is seeking a modification to child support alone.
387 Wage Assignment Hearing	A petition for the transfer or assignment in advance of the defendant's wages, generally in connection with a previous judgment or to remove a previously ordered wage assignment.
501 Probate	Includes all cases involving the administration of decedents' estates. This type of case should only be reopened for matters that require a hearing before a judge. Annual accountings that do not require a hearing should not be reported as a reopened case.
541 Judicial Hospitalization	Includes all cases in which a person is considered mentally or developmentally incompetent and is hospitalized by judicial decree. It can also be referred to as involuntary civil commitment. This type of case should only be reopened for matters that require a hearing before a judge.
571 Conservatorship	Cases in which a person (conservator) is lawfully invested with the power and charged with the duty of take care of the property of another person who is considered incapable of managing his own affairs. This type of case should only be reopened for matters that require a hearing before a judge. Annual accountings that do not require a hearing should not be reported as a reopened case.
572 Guardianship	Cases in which a person (guardian) is a lawfully invested with the power and charged with the duty of taking care of the rights of another person (ward) who is considered incapable of caring for himself/herself. This type of case should only be reopened for matters that require a hearing before a judge. Annual accountings that do not require a hearing should not be reported as a reopened case.
573 Trust	All cases involving the legal possession of real or personal property held by one person for the benefit of another. This type of case should only be reopened for matters that require a hearing before a judge. Annual accountings that do not require a hearing should not be reported as a reopened case.
551 Other (Reopened)	Any case reopened for a reason other than those specifically described in case types listed above.

## Disposition Instructions:

The disposition portion of the Civil Case Coversheet should be filled out for each original or reopened disposition of a case. (A separate coversheet is used for each case number.)

### Please use the online fillable forms for additions or corrections:

<https://www.tncourts.gov/courts/court-clerks/clerks-manuals-reporting>

**If a civil case has multiple parties, its highest rated disposition should only be reported once.**

Please see the ratings on page 12

## Line-by-line Instructions for Disposition Cover Sheet:

Line Item	Instruction
8. Disposition Date	Date the final order is entered or the date the dismissal or withdrawal is accepted by the court, not when costs are paid.
9. Manner of Disposition <div>If a case has multiple parties, report the highest disposition.</div>	Enter the appropriate type of disposition.  See 'Manner of Disposition' definitions. See additional information regarding multiple party dispositions.
Alternative Dispute Resolution <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Check Yes, if ADR was involved. Check No, if ADR was not involved.
10. Judge <div>Child Support Referees are also assigned generic judge codes.</div>	Write in the <u>full name</u> of the judge who heard the case, even if he/she sat for another judge. <b>(Do not use judge codes on paper forms.)</b> <b>*Reopened cases:</b> If one judge heard the original case and a different judge heard the reopened case, please report the judge who heard the reopened matter. Do not report the judge who heard the original matter. <b>*Three-Judge Panel:</b> Reported as docket number + Identifier Identifier A = Chief, Identifier B or C = Panel.

11. Damages & Torts (471) or Medical Malpractice (451)  <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No & Amount \$ _____	For case types: 451 or 471 and money damages were awarded, check <b>'YES'</b> and enter the amount awarded, if available. This field should only include original dollar amounts. Additur and Remittitur amounts should be reported in appropriate fields. For case types: 451 or 471 and no money damages were awarded, check <b>'NO'</b> .
12. Additur \$ _____ Remittitur \$ _____	For case types: 451 or 471 and involved an additur or remittitur to the original award, fill in the amount beside the appropriate category. Only report the additur or remittitur amount.

## Manner of Disposition (Disposition Categories):

**Field on Disposition Coversheet used to categorize the disposition for the case.**

Item	Definition
1. Withdrawn/ Voluntary Nonsuit	When the plaintiff abandons his case, and consents that judgment go against him for costs.
2. Compromise/ Settlement – no court hearing	<p>A settlement that does not necessarily involve both parties appearing before the judge.</p> <p>Includes dismissals initiated by one of the parties for failure to prosecute; reconciliation orders, workers' compensation settlements; compromise and settlement orders.</p> <p>Agreed Orders of Dismissal or Compromise/Agreed Settlements should be reported as 'Compromise/Settlements' not as 'Dismissals'.</p> <p>Typically, the parties have reached an agreement and the attorneys or parties have brought the order for the judge to sign. Note that a judge may swear in a witness and hear testimony, as long as the party or parties have come before the judge to have a compromise or settlement finalized by order, this is still reported as a Compromise/Settlement – no court hearing, not as a Non-Jury Trial.</p>

3. Court Approved Settlement	<p>The parties have reached an agreement and appear before the judge.</p> <p>The judge signs the agreement order after hearing whatever evidence he/she deems necessary.</p> <p>The judge may swear in witnesses and hear evidence to satisfy the court that the settlement is valid.</p> <p>This swearing in and presentation of evidence does not constitute a 'Non-Jury Trial'.</p>
4. Uncontested/ Default	A defendant either chose not to or failed to contest the plaintiff's allegation.
5. Transferred	<p>The removal of a case from the jurisdiction of one court or judge to another by lawful authority. This does not include cases reassigned to another judge within the same judicial district and court.</p> <p>It only includes those transferred to another district or from circuit to chancery, etc.</p> <p>Include the judge who signed the transfer order.</p>
6. Dismissal	<p>An order or judgment rendered by the judge disposing of an action, suit, motion, etc., without trial of the issues involved.</p> <p>Terminates the jurisdiction of a trial court before a judgment is reached. Such may be either voluntary or involuntary.</p>
7. Trial-Non-Jury (Bench)	<p>A trial is held before a judge. The party or parties have come before the judge seeking a decision based on the merits of their case. Witnesses and evidence are presented and the judge renders a final decision in the case.</p> <p>When at least one witness has been sworn under this scenario, the case is to be reported as disposed by Trial – Non-Jury even if the parties reach a compromise or settlement.</p>
8. Trial-Jury	<p>Trial is held before a judge with a jury impaneled. The party or parties appear in court seeking a jury verdict on the merits of their case.</p> <p>Please note that under this scenario once a jury is impaneled, whether they render a verdict or not, the case is to be reported as disposed by Trial-Jury even if the parties reach a compromise or settlement.</p>
9. Other	Any case disposed in a manner not specifically described in one of the other categories.

## Multiple Party Dispositions:

If a civil case involves **multiple parties**, only report “one” disposition for the case. Once judgments have been reached for all parties, the case should be disposed. The highest-level manner of disposition should be used in the disposition, using the order of ranking listed below. “Trial – Jury” is the highest level and “Other” is the lowest level.

### Highest

1. Trial – Jury
2. Trial – Non-Jury
3. Court Approved Settlement
4. Dismissal
5. Transferred
6. Uncontested/Default
7. Compromise Settlement – No Court Hearing
8. Withdrawn
9. Other

#### Note:

Do **not** report the case closed until there has been a disposition for **all the parties**.

### Lowest

See “Manner of Disposition” for definitions.

Before such a case is considered closed, an order of judgment must be entered pertaining to all parties, either jointly or individually.

If any of the dispositions involved Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), the case disposition should also report that ADR was involved, regardless if that party’s disposition was the highest-level manner of disposition.

For example, if there were 2 parties involved in a case and one party’s manner of disposition was “Trial Non-Jury”, and the second party’s disposition was “Court Approved Settlement” involving ADR, the case would be reported with the manner of disposition as “Trial, Non-Jury”, and the ADR checkbox would be marked as “Yes”.

## Child Support/Interstate Support Cases:

Child support/interstate support cases should be reported closed on the date a support order is entered or on the date of transfer to another state. Do **NOT** leave cases open until a child reaches age eighteen.

After the final order of a child support case, a subsequent hearing should only be considered a reopening of the case if a petition is filed to change the original order.

Outgoing UIFSA cases can be closed when the "Certificate and Order" is signed and transmitted to the defendant's state of residence. Do not wait for a response from the other state before disposing of the case.

## **Reconciliation Orders in Divorce Cases:**

Reconciliation orders or orders of suspension in divorce cases should be disposed when they are granted. The case should only be reopened upon further activity, such as a petition.

### **Note:**

After the divorce or the reconciliation order is granted, the case should be closed. DO NOT reopen for a divorce. Create a new case.

## **Small Estate Probate:**

The small estate affidavit limited letter of authority shall remain open and active until the first anniversary to allow for amendments or conversions to the original affidavit limited letter of authority.

The disposition date for small estate probate cases should be reported the day the order is signed. In most instances, these cases are filed and disposed on the same day.

Since the clerk signs the order for these cases, report the judge as the clerk and master code for that district.

## **Conservatorship:**

Conservatorship cases should be reported as disposed to the AOC when the inventory is filed. If the particular case has no inventory issue, it should be reported closed when the conservator is appointed. A reopening should only be filed if there is a matter in the case that will require a hearing before a judge. Annual accountings that do not require a hearing should not be reported as a reopened case.

## **Guardianship:**

Guardianship cases should be reported as disposed to the AOC when the guardian is appointed. A reopening should only be filed if there is a matter in the case that will require a hearing before a judge. Annual accountings or periodic reporting by a guardian that do not require a hearing should not be reported as a reopened case.

## **Trust:**

Trust cases should be reported as disposed to the AOC when the order establishing the trust is signed. A reopening is only filed if there is a matter in the case that requires a hearing before a judge. Annual accountings that do not require a hearing should not be reported as a reopened case.

## Judicial Hospitalization:

Judicial Hospitalization cases should be reported as disposed to the AOC after the second hearing has taken place. In these cases, an initial hearing takes place and the individual in question is placed under a psychiatric evaluation. A second hearing is held after this evaluation period to determine competency. It is at the conclusion of this second proceeding that the case should be reported as disposed. A reopening should only be filed if a matter in the case that will require a hearing before a judge.

## Medical Malpractice and Other Damages and Torts Disposition Information:

Tennessee Code Annotated, § 16-21-111, requires the clerks of court and the clerks and master to report additional information regarding cases claiming monetary damages for personal injury or death.

If a medical malpractice or damages and torts case has multiple awards, report the total of the original awards.

### Note:

Question 11 on the civil case coversheet should be checked yes, only if monetary damages were awarded for case types 451 or 471. If an award was granted, fill in the original award amount.

## Disposing a filing vs Closing a Case:

Disposing a filing on a case: Original or reopen filing is disposed after the judge hears the case and signs an order disposing of the petition. It is then reported to TJIS.

Closing a case means all fees have been paid to the court and it will never be opened again (we do not need this information for TJIS).