

BISON FILE & SERVE QUICK GUIDE FOR FILING A NEW CASE OR APPEAL



This Quick Guide outlines how users can file a new case or appeal with the Office of Hearings and Appeals via Bison File & Serve.

For in-depth information on using Bison File and Serve, please review the [User Guides](#).

Please consult the [Standing Orders on Electronic Transmission](#) for additional guidance.

DOI's Office of Hearings and Appeals (OHA) has deployed **Bison File & Serve (BFS)**, an online eFiling system for case adjudication, for five OHA units:

Departmental Cases Hearings Division (DCHD)

Office of the Director (DIR)

Interior Board of Indian Appeals (IBIA)

Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA)

White Earth Reservation Land Settlement Act Hearings Division (WELSA)

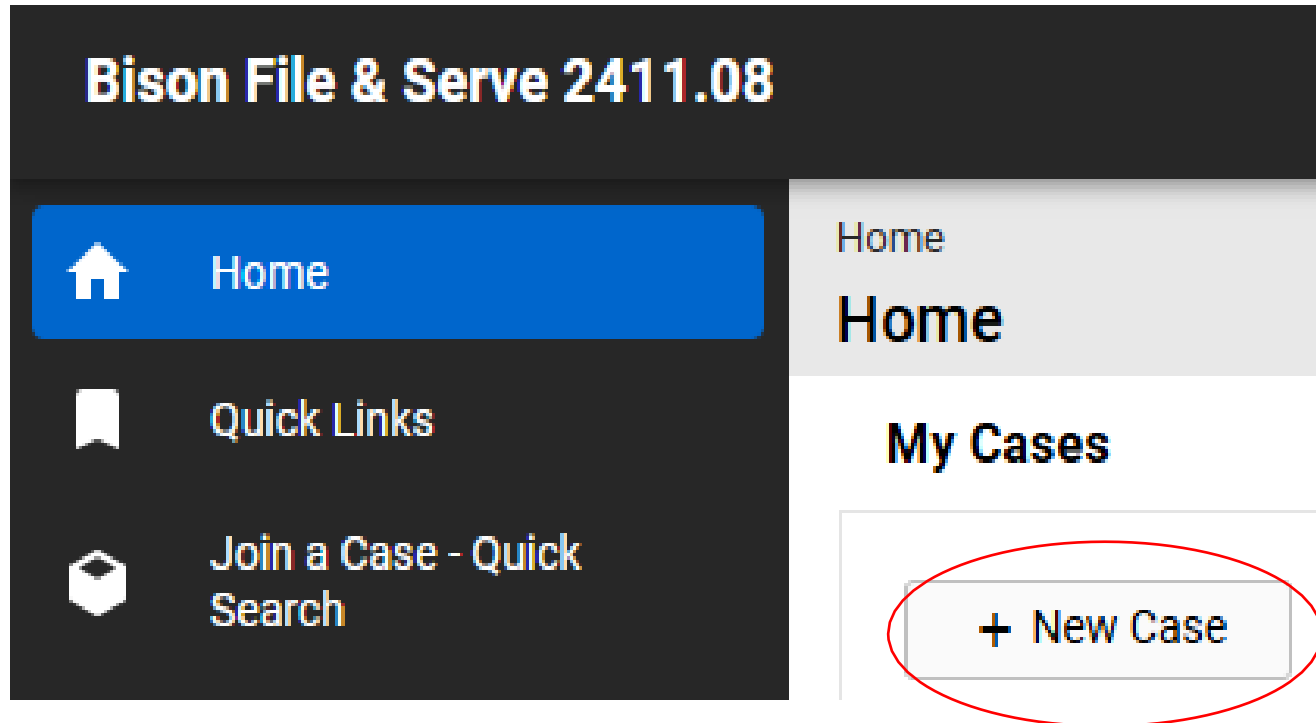
Please visit <https://www.doi.gov/oha/bfs> for information on BFS registration and login.

All users must register to access the system.

Please consult the [Non-DOI User Guide](#) before contacting the [Helpdesk](#). OHA personnel cannot assist in BFS user issues; all technical questions or concerns must be directed to the [Helpdesk](#).

After logging in to BFS, click on + New Case from the eFiler home screen.

There is a five-step process for filing a new case.



NOTE: Following these steps will result in the submission of a new case. Do not follow these steps to file a document in an existing case. Instead, file a document in an existing case by first requesting to join the case.

Step 1: Click the Acknowledgement checkbox and click “Save.”

Bison File & Serve 2411.08

Home

Quick Links

Join a Case - Quick Search

Home / New Case

Case

Step 1

Filers may submit documents electronically to the Office of Hearings and Appeals (OHA) through Bison File & Serve as authorized by the OHA Standing Orders on Electronic Transmission available on the OHA website. Electronic filing of a document does not relieve the filer of the obligation to serve that document on interested parties to a case that have not consented to electronic service through the Bison File & Serve system. Please ensure that any notices of appeal uploaded into this system are filed or served, as applicable, with the office of the official that issued the decision being appealed.

OHA uses Bison File & Serve to receive official filings electronically in lieu of paper filings. Sending a document directly to an OHA unit via e-mail, rather than through Bison File & Serve, does not constitute electronic filing unless otherwise specified by that unit.

Documents filed electronically must be transmitted by 11:59 pm Eastern Time (DIR, IBLA, IBIA), by 11:59 pm Central Time (WELSA), or by 11:59 pm Mountain Time (DCHD) on the day the document is required to be filed with the applicable OHA unit to be considered timely filed.

At all times, any person filing electronically assumes the risk of all errors not solely attributable to a malfunction of Bison File & Serve that may result in the inability to complete an electronic transmission. If the filer experiences problems with Bison File & Serve, please contact the system administrator at BFSHelpdesk@oha.doi.gov. The filer should provide supporting evidence of the problem, such as a copy of an error message or screen print of an error page. OHA will verify reported outages of Bison File & Serve.

Acknowledgement *

☒ I acknowledge that I have read and understood the above policies and procedures in their entirety and agree to abide by them.

Save

Step 2: Select the OHA unit where you want to file your case and indicate whether you are a DOI employee. You may also select the bureau or office that is relevant to your case.

Step 2: Case Information

Where Do You Want to File the Case? *

Which Bureau or Office is Relevant to the Case? [?]

Link

[Click here for a list of bureau/office acronym definitions](#)

Are You a Department of the Interior Employee? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

Click "Yes" if you are a DOI Employee. Otherwise, select "No."

Save to Continue

Step 3: Fill in the relevant contact information.

Select whether you are filing on your own behalf (i.e., you are an appellant or initiating party), on behalf of yourself and someone else (i.e., you are an appellant or initiating party and a representative), or only on behalf of someone else (i.e., you are only a representative of the appellant or initiating party).

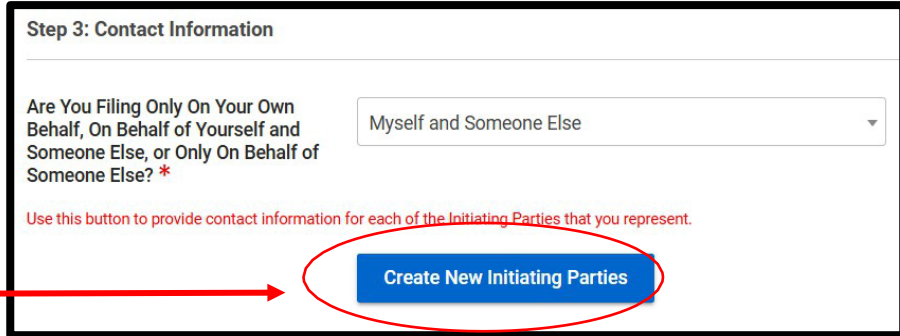
If you are filing on behalf of someone else, you **must** click the "Create New Initiating Parties" button to add contact information *for the parties that you represent*. **Do not fill out your own contact information**. Your contact information will be automatically added to the case from your user registration information regardless of whether you are filing on your own behalf or on behalf of someone else.



Step 3: Contact Information

Are You Filing Only On Your Own Behalf, On Behalf of Yourself and Someone Else, or Only On Behalf of Someone Else? *

Myself
Myself and Someone Else
Someone Else



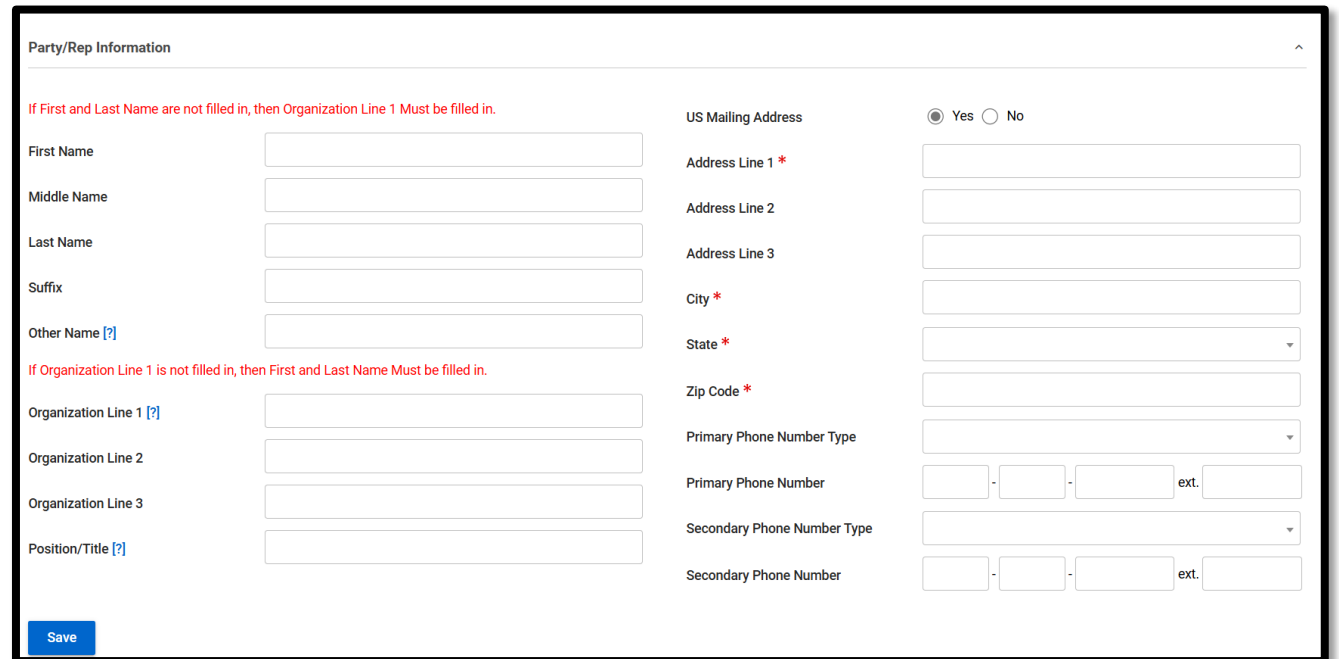
Step 3: Contact Information

Are You Filing Only On Your Own Behalf, On Behalf of Yourself and Someone Else, or Only On Behalf of Someone Else? *

Myself and Someone Else

Use this button to provide contact information for each of the Initiating Parties that you represent.

Create New Initiating Parties



Party/Rep Information

If First and Last Name are not filled in, then Organization Line 1 Must be filled in.

First Name
Middle Name
Last Name
Suffix
Other Name [?]
Organization Line 1 [?]
Organization Line 2
Organization Line 3
Position/Title [?]

US Mailing Address

Address Line 1 *
Address Line 2
Address Line 3
City *
State *
Zip Code *
Primary Phone Number Type
Primary Phone Number
Secondary Phone Number Type
Secondary Phone Number

☒ Yes ☐ No

Save

Step 4: Select the DOI bureaus and offices to be notified of your new case.

Bureaus and offices selected at this step will receive an email notification that your case has been filed with OHA. Any documents submitted with your new case will be attached to the email notification, which will constitute service of those documents on the selected bureaus and offices. For most cases, you will need to serve the DOI bureau or office that issued the decision being challenged and the appropriate Office of the Solicitor. Check the service terms specified in the OHA Standing Orders for more information on effecting service of your case.

[OHA Standing Orders | U.S. Department of the Interior](#)

Check the boxes next to the DOI bureaus and offices that you want to receive service. The service list is tiered, starting with the highest level offices and filtering down to the agency and field offices.

Once you have selected the bureaus and offices that you want to serve, click "Update Service List."

Step 4: Electronic Service on the Department of the Interior

Please complete service of your case initiating documents electronically on Department of the Interior bureaus/offices by selecting the individuals or offices that you wish to serve. It is not possible to electronically serve your case initiating documents on non-Departmental persons or entities through Bison File & Serve; you must serve your case initiating documents on those persons or entities by other means, as described in the OHA Standing Order(s) on Electronic Transmission (available on the OHA website).

Bureau/Office

OFFICE OF THE SOLICITOR (SOL)

Bureau/Office Service Parties

☐ (SOL) - Rocky Mountain Field Office, Billings

☒ (SOL) - Rocky Mountain Regional Office

☐ (SOL) - Southeast Field Office, Knoxville

Update Service List

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Bureau/Office

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT (BLM)

Bureau/Office Service Parties

☒ (BLM) - Alaska

☐ (BLM) - Arizona

☐ (BLM) - California

Bureau/Office Service Parties Sub-list

☒ (BLM) - (Alaska) - Alaska State Office

☐ (BLM) - (Alaska) - Anchorage District Office

☐ (BLM) - (Alaska) - Anchorage Field Office

Update Service List

Step 5: Upload the documents that you want to submit to OHA.

Step 5: Document Upload

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1. Click “Upload New Document.”

Document Type *

The maximum submission size for uploads is 30 MB. See BFS DOI User Guide for details. **The acceptable file formats are .pdf, .doc, or .jpeg.**

File names may not exceed 255 characters per upload. Zip files are not allowed except in limited circumstances applying only to DOI bureaus/offices.

Warning: If you would like to submit a privileged or confidential document, please ensure you select the appropriate document type from the drop-down list. Documents that are not uploaded under the privileged or confidential document types will be immediately viewable by other parties to the case upon submission.

File * 2

Date-stamped File

If this document is split into multiple parts, select the part number below.

Part Number of Document 3

Action Type * 4

5

2. Select a file to Upload to your case. The maximum submission size for case-initiating documents is 30 MB.

3. If you are splitting a document into multiple parts, you may assign a consecutive number to each part. If you are not splitting a document into multiple parts, do not assign a part number.

4. Select an Action Type and Sub-Type, if applicable. The Action Type options vary by OHA unit. A list of the available Action Types is included in Appendix 1 and 2 of the User Guides, <https://www.doi.gov/oha/bfs/support>.

5. Click “Save” to add your document to the submission.

IMPORTANT: Selecting the proper Action Type is essential to protect privileged and confidential information from being improperly disclosed to OHA and/or parties to the case. For detailed guidance on filing privileged and confidential information, see the BFS eFiling Confidential or Privileged Documents User Guide.

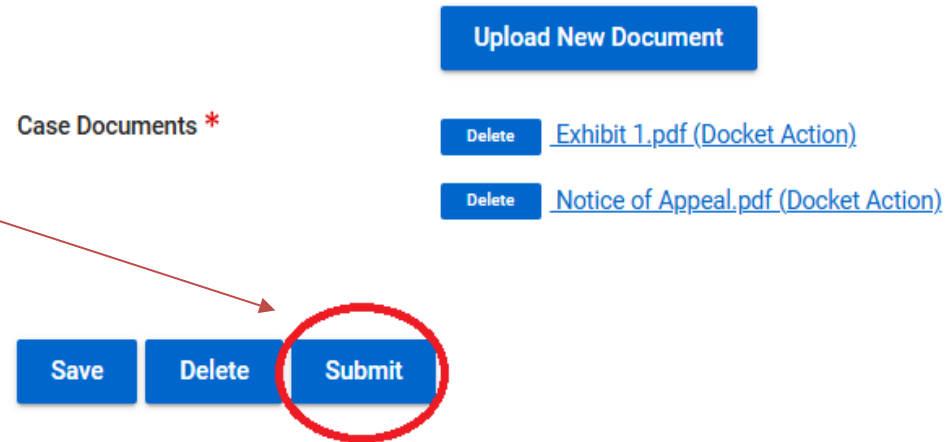
Final Step: Submit your case.

After you are done uploading your documents, click “Submit” to file them with OHA.

A “Workflow Message” will appear at the top of the screen



Step 5: Document Upload



A “Submission Confirmation” email will be sent to your email address if your submission is successful.

