

# Copyright Office Fees

The Register of Copyrights sets fees for the Office’s services. This circular provides details about the Office’s fee schedule, its services, and acceptable methods of payment. Topics covered include

- Registering a copyright claim
- Recording a copyright-related document
- Searching the Office’s records
- Obtaining copies of records
- Preregistering
- Requesting expedited service
- Requesting reconsideration of a refused claim
- Securing full-term retention of a deposit

The Register of Copyrights has authority under section 708 of the Copyright Act to set fees for specified services provided by the Copyright Office.<sup>1</sup> These services included registering claims to copyright, recording documents, and searching copyright records. The law gives the Register authority to set fees for other services based on the cost of providing them. To adjust fees, the Register must prepare a study for Congress proposing a new fee schedule. The proposed new fees take effect 120 days after delivery of the report unless Congress enacts a law disapproving the proposed fee schedule.

The Copyright Office charges the fees specified below for the services described. A fee list appears at the end of the circular, excluding Licensing Division service fees, which appear in a separate circular, see *Copyright Office Licensing Division Service Fees* (**Circular 76**). “Payment of Fees” below provides information about payment methods.

## Copyright Registrations

The Copyright Office charges a fee to register copyright claims based on the method you use to apply and the type of work you are registering. An application for copyright registration contains three essential elements: a completed application form, a nonrefundable filing fee, and a non-returnable deposit — that is, a copy or copies of the work being registered and “deposited” with the Copyright Office. Generally, you should prepare a separate application, filing fee, and deposit for each work you submit. In certain situations, multiple works can be registered with one application. For more information about registering multiple works, see *Multiple Works* (**Circular 34**).

### *Electronic Registration*

**Electronic registration** is the preferred way to register basic claims for literary works; visual arts works; performing arts works, including motion pictures; sound recordings; and

single serial issues. Electronic registration is also required for group registration of serials. Benefits of electronic registration include faster processing times, status tracking, online payment, and the option to upload certain categories of works or to send a physical copy of a work. The standard filing fee for electronic registration is \$65 for basic claims. However, the filing fee is \$45 if you register one work, not made for hire, and you are the only author and claimant. To access electronic registration, go to the Copyright Office's website at [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov). For information about works made for hire, see *Works Made for Hire* (**Circular 30**).

### **Registration Applications That Must Be Completed Online**

You must complete certain applications through the Office's electronic registration system. These include applications for group registration of contributions to periodicals (**GRCP**), published photographs (GRPPH), unpublished photographs (GRUPH), unpublished works (GRUW), serials (GRSE), newsletters (GRNL), and newspapers; applications to register an architectural work; and applications to supplement or amplify an existing registration (**Supplementary Registration**). Supplementary registrations to amplify or correct a GATT registration, renewal registration, or group registration for a nonphotographic database must be completed by paper.

### **Registration with Paper Forms**

You can also register using fill-in forms **TX** (literary works); **VA** (visual arts works); **PA** (performing arts works, including motion pictures); **SR** (sound recordings); and **SE** (single serial issues). Form **CON** is a continuation sheet available for applications that require more space than the standard fill-in forms. Complete the form for the type of work you are registering, print it out, sign it, and mail it with a check or money order and your deposit. You can also request blank forms by postal mail. The fee for a basic registration using one of these forms is \$125 payable by check or money order. Fees for other registrations submitted by paper may be found below. Credit cards are not accepted for filings on these forms unless the forms are hand-delivered to the Public Information Office. To access forms, go to the Copyright Office website and select Forms under the *Law and Guidance* tab.

### **Registration Applications That Must Be Completed on Paper**

You must complete certain applications on paper and mail them to the Copyright Office with the appropriate fee and deposit. These include applications to register vessel designs (Form **D-VH**); mask works (Form **MW**); renewal of copyright claims (Form **RE**); and works in which the U.S. copyright was restored under the 1994 Uruguay Round Agreements Act (Form **GATT**). In addition, some types of group submissions also require paper applications, including automated database updates that consist mostly of content other than photographs (Form **TX**).

## **Recordation of Documents**

The Copyright Office charges a fee to record documents pertaining to a copyright, such as a transfer of copyright, a will, a license, or a notice of termination. The fee to record a document of any length including no more than one work, which is identified by a title and/or registration number, is \$125. Additional works and alternate identifiers (additional titles and registration numbers) are another \$60 for each group of ten or fewer additional works and alternate identifiers referenced in the same document. When a document is accompanied by an electronic title sheet, additional works and alternate identifiers are subject to a reduced fee scale, as shown below. For information on current recordation practices see [www.copyright.gov/recordation](http://www.copyright.gov/recordation).

## Searches of Copyright Office Records

The Copyright Office charges a fee when its staff searches the Office's records for information about copyright registrations, renewals, transfers, and other documents relating to the copyright status of works. Upon request, the Office will estimate the total cost of a search. The fee for a search estimate is \$200, which is applicable to the search fee. The hourly search fee, including the preparation of an official search report, is \$200 with a two-hour minimum.

For general search requests, complete the search estimate [form](#) online, call the Records Research and Certification Section at (202) 707-6787, or send an email to [copycerts@copyright.gov](mailto:copycerts@copyright.gov). For litigation search requests, call (202) 707-6787 or send an e-mail to [coplitigationssupport@copyright.gov](mailto:coplitigationssupport@copyright.gov) (domestic litigation) or [copinternationalsupport@copyright.gov](mailto:copinternationalsupport@copyright.gov) (international litigation). The Office will not search to determine whether a work similar to a work of interest has already been registered. Such searches are not necessary under copyright law.

**NOTE:** You can search the Copyright Office's online database for records created between January 1, 1978, and the present. You can also visit the Copyright Reading Room, located in Room LM-463 of the James Madison Memorial Building of the Library of Congress, 101 Independence Avenue SE, Washington DC 20559, to search Copyright Office catalogs, pre-1978 records, and other records. See *How to Investigate the Copyright Status of a Work (Circular 22)* for details.

## Copies of Copyright Office Records

The Copyright Office charges a fee for locating or retrieving records, providing additional certificates of registration, or certifying copyright records. The hourly fee to locate or retrieve nonelectronic records is \$200 per hour with a one-hour minimum. The fee to retrieve electronic records is \$200 per hour with a half-hour minimum; billing occurs thereafter in quarter-hour increments. Additional certificates of registration are \$55 each. The charge for certifying a record is \$200 per hour. The certification fee is in addition to fees for other applicable services, such as fees for searches or photocopies. To request copies of Copyright Office records, call the Records Research and Certification Section at (202) 707-6787 or send an email to [copycerts@copyright.gov](mailto:copycerts@copyright.gov). Under certain limited conditions, copies of copyright deposits may be provided. For more information, see *Obtaining Access to and Copies of Copyright Office Records and Deposits (Circular 6)*.

## Preregistration

The Copyright Office charges a fee for preregistration. Unpublished works that are being prepared for commercial distribution and that fall within certain classes of works may be eligible. The fee is \$200. Preregistration forms must be filed electronically. The Office does not accept preregistration filings on paper, in person, or by regular mail. For more information, see [chapter 1600](#) of the *Compendium*.

## **Expedited Services and Special Handling**

The Copyright Office charges a fee for expedited registration and recordation services, called “special handling.” Special handling is available if you have a compelling need related to pending or prospective litigation, customs matters, or contract or publishing deadlines. To request special handling, you must provide a signed statement explaining why you need it, and you must include a certification that the details of your request are correct to the best of your knowledge.

The fee for special handling of qualified applications for registration is \$800 per claim. There is an additional fee of \$50 for each (non-special-handling) claim using the same deposit. The fee for expedited recordation of documents is \$550. Special handling fees are not refundable.

The Copyright Office may provide other services on an expedited basis under certain circumstances and with prior approval. For example, the Office may provide expedited searches or copies of Copyright Office records. For more information and instructions, see *Special Handling* (**Circular 10**) and **chapter 2400**, section 2411, of the *Compendium*.

## **Requests for Reconsideration (Appeals)**

The Copyright Office charges a fee to reconsider a refusal to register a copyright claim. If the Office refuses to register your claim to copyright, it will notify you in writing. After such notification, you can seek reconsideration of the refusal by sending a letter requesting reconsideration and setting forth your objections to the refusal not later than three months after the date that appears on the Office’s written refusal. The cost of a first request for reconsideration is \$350 per claim. If registration is again refused, a second request for reconsideration can be submitted. The cost of a second reconsideration is \$700 per claim. The Copyright Office’s decision in response to the second request for reconsideration constitutes final agency action. For more information, see **chapter 1700** of the *Compendium*.

## **Full-Term Retention**

The Copyright Office charges a fee for full-term retention of copyright deposits. The Office’s policy is to retain published copyright deposits that have not been selected by the Library for its collections for 20 years and all unpublished deposits for 120 years. If you want to ensure that the Copyright Office’s decision retains your published deposit for the full length of the copyright term, you must pay a fee of \$540 to cover processing and storage costs for a physical deposit and a fee of \$220 to cover processing and storage costs for an electronic deposit. Send requests for full-term retention to

U.S. Copyright Office  
Attn: Director of the Office of Public Records and Repositories  
101 Independence Avenue SE  
Washington DC 20559-6000

For more information, see **chapter 2400**, section 2410, of the *Compendium*.

## **Payment Processing Service Charges**

The Copyright Office charges a fee of \$285 for an overdraft of a deposit account; \$500 for a dishonored replenishment check for a deposit account; and \$115 for an uncollectible or nonnegotiable check.

## **Other Claims and Services**

Fees for other types of services and claims, such as processing secure tests and providing deposit receipts, appear in the fee list at the end of this circular. See section 203.6 of Title 37 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* for a list of fees for requests related to the Freedom of Information Act. For detailed information about these and other services, visit the Copyright Office website.

## **Payment of Fees**

Depending on the service you receive and the method of its delivery, you can pay by credit card; deposit account; Automated Clearing House (ACH) debit; currency; or check, money order, or bank draft payable to the *U.S. Copyright Office*. The Copyright Office accepts American Express, Discover, MasterCard, and Visa.<sup>2</sup>

**NOTE:** Currency is accepted only when a service is provided in person in the Public Information Office. The Copyright Office does not accept currency by mail and cannot assume any responsibility for the loss of currency sent in payment of copyright fees.

### ***Electronic Services***

You can pay by credit card, debit card, or ACH debit for services provided electronically, including electronic registration of copyright claims. To administer payment for electronic services, the Copyright Office uses *Pay.gov*, a U.S. Treasury Department system for secure processing of payments to federal government agencies. You can also pay for electronic services by debit card or Copyright Office deposit account (see below).

### ***Services by Mail***

If you send a service request by postal mail, the only acceptable methods of payment are check or money order payable to the *U.S. Copyright Office* or a Copyright Office deposit account (see below). If a check received in payment of a registration or recordation filing fee is returned to the Copyright Office as uncollectible, registration or recordation will be delayed until a valid payment is received, and a service charge of \$30 will be applied.

### ***Services by Phone or in Person***

You can pay for some services by credit card when you request them by phone. Call the Records Research and Certification Section at (202) 707-6787 to use a credit card to pay for additional certificates of registration; copies of documents and deposits; certifications; search and retrieval of deposits; expedited processing; or estimating the cost of searching Copyright Office records.

The Public Information Office accepts credit cards, currency, checks, and money orders in payment of Copyright Office services requested by walk-in visitors. In addition, you can charge fees for on-site use of Copyright Office printers and photocopiers.

### ***Deposit Accounts***

An individual or organization can establish a deposit account, make advance deposits into that account, and charge copyright fees against the balance in the account instead of sending separate payments with applications and other requests for services. For more information, see *How to Open and Maintain a Copyright Office Deposit Account* (**Circular 5**).

### ***Foreign Checks and Money Orders***

All foreign checks or money orders must be redeemable without a service or exchange fee through a U.S. institution, payable in U.S. dollars, and imprinted with American Banking Association routing numbers. Postal money orders and international money orders that are negotiable only at a post office are not acceptable.

### **Refunds**

Payments more than \$50 in excess of the required fee will be refunded automatically, but refunds of \$50 or less will be made only upon written request.

To cover administrative and processing costs, fees received in conjunction with certain services typically will not be refunded, even when the services cannot be provided. For example, the Copyright Office will not refund filing fees received for basic, supplementary, or renewal registration; for preregistration; or for special handling, whether or not copyright registration or preregistration is ultimately made.

Before making any refund of fees received for nonregistration services, the Copyright Office will deduct an administrative processing fee in an amount equivalent to one hour of the requested service or the minimum fee for the service.

### **Public Information Office**

Visit the Copyright Office's Public Information Office between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., eastern time, Monday through Friday, to secure the services described in this circular that are available in person.

U.S. Copyright Office  
James Madison Memorial Building  
101 Independence Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20559

To secure services available by phone, call (202) 707-3000 or 1-877-476-0778 (toll free).

## Copyright Office Fees

- Fees in effect as of March 20, 2020
- For Licensing Division fees, request [Circular 76](#)
- All forms available at [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov)

### Basic Registrations

Each registration must include properly completed application form, nonrefundable filing fee, and nonreturnable deposit.

#### Registrations online

- \$45 Single Application (single author, same claimant, one work, not for hire)
- \$65 Standard Application (all other filings)

#### Registrations on paper

- \$125 Paper filing on Form TX, Form VA, Form PA, Form SE, and Form SR

### Renewal Registrations

For works published or registered before January 1, 1978

- \$125 Form RE
- \$100 Addendum to Form RE (in addition to fee for claim)

### Group Registrations

To register a group of related claims, where appropriate

- \$35 Serials, per issue, with minimum two issues (online application only)
- \$95 Newspapers or newsletters (online application only)
- \$85 Contributions to periodicals (online application only)
- \$55 Published photographs or unpublished photographs (online application only)
- \$85 Group of unpublished works (online application only)
- \$250 Group of updates for a photographic database (online or paper application)
- \$500 Group of updates for a nonphotographic database (paper application only)

### Supplementary Registrations

- \$100 Electronic filing (to correct or amplify a completed registration)
- \$150 Paper filing for correction or amplification of renewal registrations, GATT registrations, and group registrations for non-photographic databases (Form CA)
- \$100 Form DC (to correct a design registration)

### Preregistration

- \$200 Preregistration of certain unpublished works

### Other Registrations

- \$500 Form D-VH (vessel designs)
- \$100 Form GATT
- \$150 Form MW (mask works)

## Optional Services Related to Registration

### Special Handling

To expedite registration processing of qualified claims

- \$800 Special handling fee (per claim)
- \$50 Additional fee for each (non-special-handling) claim using the same deposit

Other fees associated with registration

- \$540 Full-term retention of published copyright deposit (physical deposit)
- \$220 Full-term retention of published copyright deposit (electronic deposit)
- \$250 Secure test examining (per staff member per hour)
- \$50 Handling extra copy for certification
- \$150 Voluntary cancellation of registration
- \$40 Matching unidentified deposit to deposit ticket claim (per half hour)

### Requests for Reconsideration (Appeals)

For claims previously refused registration

- \$350 First request (per claim)
- \$700 Second request (per claim)



## Other Copyright Service Fees

### Recordation of Documents

To make public record of assignment of rights or other document relating to disposition of copyrighted work

- \$125 Recordation of document, including notice of intention to enforce (base fee includes 1 work identified by 1 title and/or registration number) (paper filing)
- \$95 Recordation of document, including notice of intention to enforce (base fee includes 1 work identified by 1 title and/or registration number) (electronic filing)
- \$95 Additional transfer (per transfer) (for documents recorded under 17 U.S.C. 205)
- \$60 Additional works and alternate identifiers (per group of 10 or fewer additional works and alternate identifiers)

When document is accompanied by electronic title list:

- \$60 1 to 50 additional works and alternate identifiers
- \$225 51 to 500 additional works and alternate identifiers
- \$390 501 to 1,000 additional works and alternate identifiers
- \$555 1,001 to 10,000 additional works and alternate identifiers
- \$5,550 10,001 or more additional works and alternate identifiers
- \$7 Correction of online public catalog data due to erroneous electronic title submission (per title)

Other fees associated with recordation:

- \$550 Special handling fee for recordation of a document
- \$75 Schedule of pre-1972 sound recordings, or supplemental schedule of pre-1972 sound recordings (single sound recording)
- \$10 Additional sound recordings (per group of 1 to 100 sound recordings)
- \$75 Removal of pre-1972 sound recording from Office's database of indexed schedules (single sound recording)
- \$50 Notice of noncommercial use of pre-1972 sound recording

- \$50 Opt-out notice of noncommercial use of pre-1972 sound recording

### Searches of Records

For searching copyright records and preparing official report

- \$200 Estimate of search fee (credited to search fee)
- \$200 Search report (per hour, 2 hour minimum)
- \$500 Expedited report (per hour, 1 hour minimum)
- \$200 Certification of search report (per hour)

### Retrievals and Copies of Records

Retrieval of in-process or completed Copyright Office records

- \$200 Estimate of retrieval fee (credited to retrieval fee)
- \$200 Retrieval of paper records (per hour, 1 hour minimum)
- \$200 Retrieval of digital records (per hour, half hour minimum, quarter-hour increments)
- \$55 Additional certificate of registration
- \$200 Certification of records, including search reports (per hour)
- \$500 Surcharge for expedited retrievals, certification, and copying (per hour, 1 hour minimum)
- \$100 Litigation statement (Form LS)
- \$12 Copying of Copyright Office records by staff (all media)

### Removal of Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

- \$100 Initial request (per registration record)
- \$60 Reconsideration of denied request (flat fee)

### Miscellaneous Fees

- \$30 Receipt for deposit without registration (section 407 deposit)
- \$6 Designation of agent under section 512(c)(2) to receive notification of claimed infringement or amendment or resubmission of agent
- \$50 Notice to libraries and archives (each additional title \$20)
- \$45 Service charge for Federal Express mailing
- \$1 Service charge for delivery of documents via fax (per page, seven pages maximum)



***Payment Processing Service Charges***

- \$285 Overdraft of deposit account
- \$500 Dishonored replenishment check for deposit account
- \$115 Uncollectible or nonnegotiable check

Copyright Office fees are subject to change.  
For current fees, check the Copyright Office website at [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov), write the Copyright Office, or call (202) 707-3000 or 1-877-476-0778 (toll free).

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**NOTES**

1. This circular is intended as an overview of copyright office fees. The authoritative source for U.S. copyright law is the Copyright Act, codified in Title 17 of the *United States Code*. Copyright Office regulations are codified in Title 37 of the *Code of Federal Regulations*. Copyright Office practices and procedures are summarized in the third edition of the *Compendium of U.S. Copyright Office Practices*, cited as the *Compendium*. The copyright law, regulations, and the *Compendium* are available on the Copyright Office website at [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov).

2. The Copyright Office also accepts credit card payments for filings under the Uruguay Round Agreements Act (URAA). These filings include notices of intent (NIEs) to enforce a restored copyright under the URAA and claims to copyright made on Form GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade). Debit cards are not accepted. See *Copyright Restoration Under the URAA (Circular 38B)*, and Form GATT for details about filing claims under the URAA.



## **For Further Information**

### ***By Internet***

The copyright law, the *Compendium*, electronic registration, application forms, regulations, and related materials are available on the Copyright Office website at [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov).

### ***By Email***

To send an email inquiry, click the *Contact Us* link on the Copyright Office website.

### ***By Telephone***

For general information, call the Copyright Public Information Office at (202) 707-3000 or 1-877-476-0778 (toll free). Staff members are on duty from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm, eastern time, Monday through Friday, except federal holidays. To request application forms or circulars by postal mail, call (202) 707-9100 or 1-877-476-0778 and leave a recorded message.

### ***By Regular Mail***

Write to

Library of Congress  
U.S. Copyright Office  
Outreach and Education Section  
101 Independence Avenue, SE #6304  
Washington, DC 20559-6304

