Court Services Online E-Search Tips

E-Search has four methods for searching files:

1. Search by Party Name
2. Search by Deceased Name
3. Search by File Number
4. Search by Date Range

SEARCH BY PARTY NAME

Under the By **Party Name Tab**, there are three tabs, **INDIVIDUAL, ORGANIZATION or BOTH.**

Individuals are entered as SURNAME, Given name. For example: DOE, John.
Organizations are entered all UPPERCASE.
TIP - Organizations are spelled as they appear in the documents, therefore when searching common organizations ensure your search parameters will capture spelling or punctuation anomalies.

Common Searches:

ICBC	I.C.B.C. / ICBC / Insurance Corporation of British Columbia
BC Ferry	B.C. Ferry Corp. / B.C. Ferry Corporation / British Columbia Ferry Corporation
BC Hydro	B.C. Hydro / British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority

Additional names will be entered in the third Given Name field.
Name Distinctions will be entered in the next available Given Name field in CEIS For example: SMITH, John Jr or SMITH, John III
Name Titles: Most documents do not include the name title (Mr., Mrs., or Dr.) since it does not form part of the legal name.
Punctuation is entered as it appears in the document

Search tips for abbreviated names:

Search Requests	Search Results
O	Oakley, John
	O'Brien, Peter
OB	Obrene, Martha
	O'Brian, Peter
	O'Brother, Darlene
O'	O'Brian, Peter

	O'Malley, Dorothy
	O'Rourke, Johnathan

This search function also allows you select the **Location** (any court registry in British Columbia), the **Level** (Supreme or Provincial) the **Class** (Provincial - Small Claims or Family) (Supreme – bankruptcy, Divorce, Family Law, Foreclosure, Legislative Statutes, Adoption, Motor Vehicle Accidents, Probate, Supreme Civil General and Caveats. The **Party Role** (Applicant, Respondent, Petitioner, ect.)

TIP – The arrows are drop down list of values. The long description of the class appears in the drop down list of values. Leaving the class field(s) blank is the equivalent of searching ALL classes of files. By clicking in the field, you can access the choices.

Cross Reference Number: The cross reference field is a field that a user can assign their own file number, for example as a law firm you could assign your internal file number so if you are searching that file frequently you can search for it by this number. The cross reference number will also be helpful for registered users to sort account activity in monthly billing with this function.

SEARCH BY DECEASED NAME

This method of searching only selects Probate and Caveat files based on a match for the deceased name. The only required field in this field is the last name.
Individuals are entered as SURNAME, Given name. For example: DOE, John

SEARCH BY FILE NUMBER

This method is best if you have the file number you are trying to locate in front of you. The Court file number consists of the location, level, class and the file number.
TIP – Leave the Location, Level and Class blank to maximize the files returned. The file number is a mandatory field.

SEARCH BY DATE RANGE

Date File Opened: This field can allow you to search files open during a specific date range. This will select all files within a location that have been opened in the date range you specify. One week is the maximum allowable search range.
TIP - You are only allowed to search for a range up to 7 consecutive days.

These next Search tips are currently located within the CSO Application:

Search Tips

We have provided a number of general tips for the use of our search. The search service requires you to select the method of search from one of the offered methods (e.g. by party name, by file number). After you select the method of search you will be required to enter information in order for us to attempt to locate your file of interest. The more information you provide the better our system can assist you in finding your file of interest. You must keep in mind that if you provide very little information, for example, "s" when searching by party name, the *performance of your search will be negatively impacted*.

Detailed information about each of the search methods and fields that you can search on is described below.

If you do not find the file you were looking for based on the search criteria you provided you will be able to refine the search. Refine search will return you to the search criteria page for the method of search that you selected. The criteria you previously provided will be displayed and you will have the opportunity to enter in new search criteria and re-execute the search. After re-executing the search, the search results page will be displayed and it will show you a list of all files that matched the criteria provided.

Searching For Individuals

When searching for individuals you must provide all or part of the Last Name and optionally you can provide a First Name and Middle Name. If you provide a First Name and Middle Name, then the system will only find parties that match all of the name(s) provided. If the party name is different in the court file then the system may not return you any results.

For names with an apostrophe, type in the apostrophe.
For example: O'Doul, O'Brien

For names with a hyphen or periods, type in the hyphen.
For example: St. Denis or St Denis, Saint-Bertrand or Saint Bertrand

Searching For Organizations

When searching for businesses or organizations, you can type in any two words of a company name and the system will return you all organizations with those words starting with the words you provided.

The system will search all organization names including any other name types names

(e.g. doing business as, also known as name) and any legal representative names that have been entered against the court file. All files that match the supplied criteria will be displayed in the search results.

For example: Entering "Brady Fish" (without the quotes) will return results such as Brady Fish and Chips, Brady Fishing Expeditions Ltd., Brady Fish Restaurant.

For numbered corporations you can use only the number. You must make sure you are putting in any space if one exists in the number. The system will only return an exact match.
For example: 348 219 OR if there are no spaces 897654

Search by Both

If you are unsure if the party name is an individual or an organization, then we recommend that you use "search by both" method. In the search by both method, you can only enter a party surname or organization name. You can not enter a first name or middle name for this type of search.

Search by Both, will return a match if the party surname or organization name in the court file matches the supplied search name. The search will search all party name/organization name types including any other names or legal representative names. All files that match the supplied criteria will be displayed in the search results.

Searching by File Number

If you are searching by file number we require an exact match to the file number you are attempting to locate.

Provincial and Supreme Civil File Numbers

For provincial and supreme courts this consists of 4 components. Each component is separated by a "-" dash.

The following example explains this numbering system.

Example: VLC-S-S-04345678

- VLC – 3 letters representing one of the court registry locations. This is optional.
- S – 1 letter representing the level of Court (Supreme or Provincial). This is optional.
- S – 1 letter representing the class of the court filing (e.g. general, motor vehicle, bankruptcy). This is optional.
- 04345678 – up to 13 digits or characters representing the file number. This is

mandatory

You must enter the last set of digits in order to locate your file, all other components are optional. You will notice that each part of the file number has been represented as a separate field on the search screen.

Location

You can filter your search to only locate files in a specific registry location. The system will allow you to specify up to 5 different court registry locations to search for a file. You can select a registry location from the drop down list of values. The short form description and long description both appear in the drop down list of values (e.g. VLC – Vancouver Law Courts). Leaving the location field(s) blank is the equivalent of searching ALL registry locations.

If you enter a registry location, the system will return all files that match the other criteria AND are within the registry location(s) you provided.

For example, surname is 'Smith' and registry location is 'Prince George' and 'Smithers'. The system will return any matching files where the Surname is "Smith" AND the registry location is "Prince George" OR "Smithers".

Class

You can filter your search to only locate files that are within a specific civil classification. Civil File classes that are associated with a court level (Provincial, Supreme). The file classes include:

For Level – Provincial

- Family
- Small Claims

For Level – Supreme

- General (Civil)
- Divorce
- Family Law Proceedings
- Bankruptcy
- Foreclosure
- Motor Vehicle
- Legislated Statues
- Probate
- Caveat

You can select a class from the drop down list of values. The long description of the

class appears in the drop down list of values. Leaving the class field(s) blank is the equivalent of searching ALL classes of files.

If you enter a class, the system will return all files that match the other criteria AND are within the class you provided.

For example, surname is 'Smith' and class of 'Motor Vehicles'. The system will return any matching files where the Surname is "Smith" AND the file class is "Motor Vehicles". It will not return any files where Surname is "Smith" and the class is other than Motor Vehicles (for example, civil general, divorce, bankruptcy).

Note: If a level is selected the drop down list of values will contain values that are appropriate to the level you selected.

Level

You can filter your search to only locate files that are within a specific civil level. Civil File levels are Provincial, Supreme. If you are looking for a Court of Appeal file you must use the Court of Appeal Search. Court of Appeal files will not show as a level within this method of search.

You can select a level from the drop down list of values. Leaving the level field(s) blank is the equivalent of searching ALL levels (Supreme & Provincial) files.

If you enter a level, the system will return all files that match the other criteria AND are within the level you provided.

For example, surname is 'Smith' and level of 'Provincial'. The system will return any matching files where the Surname is "Smith" AND the level is "Provincial". It will not return any Supreme files.

Date

You can optionally enter a date range when the file was opened. This will further filter your other search criteria to only find files that were initiated (date opened) in the date range you provided.

Search by Party Name

Search by Deceased Name

Search by File Number

Search by Date Range