GEORGIA SUPERIOR COURT CLERKS' COOPERATIVE AUTHORITY

Real Estate eFiling Portal

Filer Implementation Guide and Transmission Standards

11/14/2022

This document contains information that allows an interested filer or submitter to access and integrate with the GSCCCA Real Estate eFiling portal

Recent Changes

<u>**October 19, 2010:**</u>

- Initial Version

<u>**December 9. 2011:**</u>

- Changed the subtitle of this document from "Filer Implementation Guide" to "Filer Implementation Guide and Transmission Standards" in an effort to better convey the intent of the document.
- Modified item #12 of the remarks section of the "Submit()" service. The remark previously referenced using a three digit county code, and incorrectly referred to a listing of county codes in Appendix A. The GSCCCA portal uses a three or five digit FIPS code for county identification, and the remark has been updated to reflect this practice.
- Added item #17 to the remarks section of the "Submit()" service. This item discusses the requirement of including Participant IDs, and where such IDs should be specified in the XML document.

<u>**March 13, 2012:**</u>

NOTE: Revisions in this change list relating to system changes are scheduled to take effect April 2, 2012

- Fixed a typo in the remarks section of items #1 and #2 of the "Submit()" service. PRIA_REQUEST_GROUP has been changed to REQUEST_GROUP.
- Amended item #13 to the remarks section of the "Submit()" service to further discuss allowable document types and special requirements.
- Amended item #17 to the remarks section of the "Submit()" service. This item discusses the requirement of including Participant IDs, and where such IDs should be specified in the XML document.
- Added item #18 to the remarks section of the "Submit()" service. This item further discusses the requirements for including Participant IDs, specifically pertaining to the number and order of participants.
- Updated several of the remarks regarding the "GetDocumentTypes()" service. The previous version incorrectly referred to a parameter as a county code, whereas the service actually expects a valid FIPS code to be provided. The section was further updated to explain special new return values that correspond with the April 2, 2012 effective date.

September 21, 2015:

- Changed http to https throughout document where appropriate.
- Removed all references to the existence of an invalid Certificate for the eFile test portal. This site now uses a valid SSL Certification.
- Updated list of compliant embedded document MIME types.
- Fixed typo in Submit point 13 changing RecordableDocumentTypeDescription to RecordableDocumentTypeOtherDescription.
- Added clarification text to Submit point 15.

November 01, 2018:

- Fixed link to Filer Guide
- Added reference to portal instrument type guide in Submit remarks
- Updated information on Self Filers in Submit Remarks to match updates to Standards
- Added example use of Non-recordable documents and Submit Example section
- Added technical specification for sending fee estimates

May 29, 2020:

- Fixed typos and grammatical errors

November 09, 2020:

- Changed references to test site to use https://efilestg.gsccca.org/

August 01, 2022

- Added subsection 20 to REService.Submit

November 14, 2022

- Added Penalties and Interest estimated fees

Purpose

This technical document is intended for information technology personnel (programmers) who service those who wish to electronically file real property records with the Clerks of Superior Court of Georgia. The document describes the interface for automated submissions of such electronic filings to Clerks of Superior Court through the GSCCCA Real Estate eFiling Portal. This document does not address eFiling through the use of individual web browsers, nor the interface for vendors of recording systems used by Clerks of Superior Court; such specifications are provided in other documents.

Assumptions

This document assumes the reader has a working understanding of the PRIA 2.4.1 standard for electronic recording of real estate filings. More information about PRIA and the standard can be found at http://www.pria.us . Furthermore, it is assumed that the reader has experience developing applications that can produce well-formed and schema compliant XML documents, parse XML documents, and consume web services based on a published WSDL.

Account Creation

All filers who submit through the GSCCCA web portal must first create a filer account. Accounts can be created online by visiting https://efile.gsccca.org and selecting the "Register" link in the "Account Management Menu". General information about the eFiling website and account creation is available in the GSCCCA Filer guide located at https://efile.gsccca.org/flrguide.aspx.

Web Service URL

The GSCCCA Real Estate web service portal can be accessed at
https://eFile.gsccca.org/eFileWebService/REService.asmx

The formal service description (WSDL) is available at:
https://eFile.gsccca.org/eFileWebService/REService.asmx?WSDL

Test Portal Web Service

The GSCCCA maintains a separate environment for submitting test filings. The system is a mirror of the production system but uses a separate database. For this reason, users of the test portal must have a separate account created on the testing website. The test server for account creation is located at
https://efilestg.gsccca.org

The web service for submissions is located at
https://efilestg.gsccca.org/eFileWebService/REService.asmx

The formal service description (WSDL) is available at:

https://efilestg.gsccca.org/eFileWebService/REService.asmx?WSDL

Access to the test portal is IP restricted and access must be requested by sending email to help@gsccca.org.

Services Provided

The following web methods are provided for the submission, tracking, and retrieval of processed Real Estate filings.

- Submit()
- GetStatus()
- RetrieveRecordedPackage()
- RetrieveRejectedPacakge()
- GetDocumentTypes()

All methods return an XML string that represents a well-formed, PRIA 2.4.1 Response. Only the submit method expects to receive a well formatted PRIA Request envelope as a parameter. However, all method invocations are considered PRIA requests and will generate replies that conform to the PRIA response envelope. All responses will include a **RESPONSE_GROUP** root element, a child **RESPONSE** element, and a child **STATUS** element. Responses that do NOT contain error messages may also contain a single **RESPONSE_DATA** element with at least one **PRIA_RESPONSE** elements.

Status provided within the **STATUS** element will utilize the **_Code**, **_Name,** and **_Description** attributes of the **STATUS** element. A full list of responses can be found in Appendix A.

Submit METHOD

Syntax

```
public string Submit(string userID, string passwd, string xml)
```

Parameters
```
userID
     Type: string
     The previously established userID of the eFiling User
passwd
     Type: string
     The previously established password of the eFiling User
xml
     Type: string
     An xml string representing a well-formed PRIA request envelope with a document to
     be recorded
```

Return Value
```
     Type: string
     A XML string that represents a well-formed PRIA response envelope conveying the
     status of the submitted request.
```

Remarks

In the discussion that follows, specific XML elements and attributed defined in the PRIA standard are highlighted in **RED** for added emphasis.

The following business rules are enforced by the GSCCCA web services portal for all Submit() invocations:

1) All calls to the Submit() method must contain a well-formed, PRIA 2.4.1 compliant **REQUEST_GROUP** root element.
2) The PRIA standard allows for each **REQUEST_GROUP** document to include one or more **REQUEST** elements. The GSCCCA system allows ONLY a single **REQUEST** element per transaction. Transactions with multiple **REQUEST** elements will be rejected.
3) Each **REQUEST** element in the PRIA 2.4.1 standard allows for one or more **PRIA_REQUEST** elements. The GSCCCA system allows only a single **PRIA_REQUEST** element per **REQUEST**. Transactions with multiple **PRIA_REQUEST** elements will be rejected.
4) Each **PRIA_REQUEST** element in the PRIA 2.4.1 standard allows for a single **PACKAGE** element. Per rules 2 and 3 above, only a single **PACKAGE** element is allowed per transaction.
5) Each **PACKAGE** element in the PRIA 2.4.1 standard allows for one or more **PRIA_DOCUMENT** elements.
6) The inclusion of at least one **PRIA_DOCUMENT** element is required for all submit transactions.

7) Each **PRIA_DOCUMENT** can contain one or more **EMBEDDED_FILE** elements. The GSCCCA system requires all submit method invocations to include AT LEAST one **EMBEDDED_FILE** element per **PRIA_DOCUMENT**. Transactions without at least one **EMBEDDED_FILE** element per **PRIA_DOCUMENT** will be rejected.

8) Each **EMBEDDED_FILE** element must include a valid value for the **MIMEType** attribute. The mime type must accurately describe the image represented by the **EMBEDDED_FILE** element, and must be one of the allowed MIME Types. Missing MIME Types, or mime types not allowed by the GSCCCA system will cause the transaction to be rejected. Allowed MIME Types are restricted to the following:
    a. IMAGE/TIFF
    b. IMAGE/TIF
    c. APPLICATION/PDF

9) Each **EMBEDDED_FILE** element must include a valid value for the **FileEncodingType** attribute.

10) Each **EMBEDDED_FILE** element must include a valid **DOCUMENT** element as defined by the PRIA 2.4.1 standard.

11) **Stated more simply, RULES 2-10 above indicate that each invocation of the submit method must contain valid xml representing a single request for one or more documents to be recorded. A digital representation of each document to be recorded must be text encoded and included as part of the xml.**

12) The **_Identifier** Attribute of the **PRIA_REQUEST_GROUP**->**RECEIVING_PARTY** element must be specified. The value of the attribute must match the Georgia county FIPS code of the county in which the document is to be recorded. The FIPS code can be specified as either the three-digit, zero padded county portion of the FIPS code, or the full 5 digit FIPS code beginning with "13" and ending with the three-digit, county portion. A missing value or an invalid value for this attribute will cause the transaction to be rejected. Participation in the GSCCCA eFiling portal is voluntary for all counties. As such, some counties do not participate in some types of eFiling. The county code specified in the **_Identifier** Attribute of the **RECEIVING_PARTY** element will be checked to ensure the county specified can accept the document type specified. If the county specified is not participating, the transaction will be rejected.

13) The GSCCCA system only accepts certain document types. Each submit method call must include the type of document being submitted. The document type can be specified using a subset of the document types defined in the PRIA 2.4.1 standard (a full list of potential types can be found at https://efile.gsccca.org/downloads/RE_PortalInstrumentTypes.pdf) and will be indicated in the **RecordableDocumentType** attribute of the **PRIA_DOCUMENT** element. Transactions that do not specify a value for the **RecordableDocumentType** attribute will be rejected. The value is case sensitive. If a transaction specifies a document type that is not being accepted for the county indicated, the transaction will be rejected indicating that the county specified is not participating. A submitter can query for the list of documents being accepted by a county using the GetDocumentTypes() service, described later in this document. If one of the document types accepted by a county is the PRIA type "Other", then **RecordableDocumentTypeOtherDescription** attribute must also be set with a value that further describes the document. Failure to include this attribute when required will result in the

document not being submitted.

14) The **_Identifier** attribute of the **PACKAGE** element will be used to uniquely identify the filing package throughout the entire filing process.

15) If a value for the **_Identifier** attribute of the **PACKAGE** element is provided at the time of submission, the GSCCCA system will record that value to aid in the prevention of duplicate filings. The value of this attribute is presumed to be unique, so if specified, the GSCCCA system will look for any filings that have been previously submitted with the same ID. If a filing is found with the same ID, the status of the filing is simply returned and the document will not be duplicated. In this case, no changes will be made to the previously submitted document.

16) IN ALL CASES, if the submission is accepted by the GSCCCA system, the **_Identifier** attribute of the **PACKAGE** element will be updated with a unique id generated by the GSCCCA system. The id will be a string representation of a GUID. The GSCCCA provided value of the **_Identifer** attribute of the **PACKAGE** element will be the only ID recognized for performing additional actions on the submitted filings, such as checking status or retrieving the recorded package.

17) The "Real Estate Electronic Recording Standards for the State of Georgia" restricts electronic recording of real estate documents to individuals and organizations that satisfy certain eligibility requirements. Such participants must register to receive a participant ID from the GSCCCA efile registry. The participant ID is to be included in all submissions of electronic documents that a participant has originated, created, forwarded to other participants or submitted to a Clerk. The order in which each participant became a party to the document must also be specified in the XML by preserving this order when listing participants. Each participant for each document must be specified by including a _PREPARED_BY_PARTY element at:

XPath:
/REQUEST_GROUP/REQUEST/PRIA_REQUEST/PACKAGE/PRIA_DOCUMENT/PARTIES/_PREPARED_BY_PARTY

For each _PREPARED_BY_PARTY element included, the following attributes must be set with valid values

_ID
The eFile Registry Participant ID of the filing participant.

_SequenceIdentifier
A number that is used to specify the order of the participants as they should appear on the document. The **_SequenceIdentifier** should match the order of appearance of each **_PREPARED_BY_PARTY** element. For instance, the first **_PREPARED_BY_PARTY** element should have a **_SequenceIdentifier** of "1". The next should have "2", and so on...

_TitleDescription
The type of Participant ID specified in the **_ID** attribute. Valid values are "TRUSTER_USER", "SUBMITTER", and "SELF_FILER". The value specified must match the value stored in the Statewide eFiling Participant Registry.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Other attributes or child nodes of the **_PREPARED_BY_PARTY** element will be ignored by the GSCCCA portal if present **EXCEPT** for the **_UnparsedName** attribute. This attribute is reserved for GSCCCA use and will cause the Submit service to return an error if a value is provided for this attribute.

18) For all documents, there must be at least one participant ID supplied. The first Participant listed must always be either a Trusted User or a Self-Filer. If the Participant is a Self-Filer then this participant must be a party to the document or filing a plat. Regardless of participant types included, there should always be as many participants listed as have been involved with the filing. Note that the listing and order of Participant IDs described herein must be based on the actions and transmissions of the filing and preparing parties.

19) As a standard for communicating fee estimates and expectations along with the PRIA xml to counties, the **CONSIDERATION** element of **the PRIA_DOCUMENT** may be used. Each fee estimate will be of _Type "Other" with a description of Estimated Base Filing Fee, Estimated Assigned Fees, Estimated Documents Being Cancelled Fees, Estimated Cross Index Fees, Estimated PT-61 Tax, Estimated Intangible Tax, Estimated Penalties, Estimated Interest, or Estimated Page Fees. In addition to passing these values on to the county in the PRIA XML, when using any of these values, the eFile website dashboard will display your estimated fee to both the filer and county when viewed.

20) An image's pages can be split between embedded files so long as each **DOCUMENT** element's data is a single page TIFF. The API identifies these documents using **EMBEDDED_FILE/@ID** attribute. Embedded files with the same ID indicate that the **DOCUMENT** data comprises different pages of a single image.
When multiple embedded files are assigned the same ID, the **DOCUMENT/@RecordableDocumentSequenceIdentifier** attribute must be included. This attribute defines the page number of each page in the overall image and must begin with the number 1, incrementing to 2, 3, 4, etc.

Examples

Non-recordable documents

Many packages may include non-recordable documents alongside a deed, plat or lien. These non-recordable documents consist of required supporting documents, notes from the filer or other images that are helpful for processing but that will not be stamped or recorded in the docket alongside the instrument. These may not be returned with the accepted documents at the county's discretion. Below is an example of what a non-recordable document looks like.

Example of non-recordable PT-61 alongside a deed.

```
<EMBEDDED_FILE ID="fa911f49-97d3-4441-9e75-57cde6b5d9b0" FileEncodingType="base64"
          MIMEType="image/tiff">
  <DOCUMENT DocumentNonRecordableIndicator="Y" RecordableDocumentSequenceIdentifier="1"
          RecordableDocumentType="Deed">[[PT-61 Base 64 Data Here]]</DOCUMENT>
```

```
</EMBEDDED_FILE>
<EMBEDDED_FILE ID="d35db555-34d1-412e-ba63-b62c08c5d407" FileEncodingType="base64"
               MIMEType="image/tiff">
    <DOCUMENT RecordableDocumentSequenceIdentifier="2" RecordableDocumentType="Deed">[[Deed Base
            64 Data Here]]</DOCUMENT>
</EMBEDDED_FILE>
```

GetStatus METHOD

Syntax

```
public string GetStatus(string userID, string passwd, string filingGUID)
```

Parameters

userID
      Type: string
      The previously established userID of the eFiling User
Passwd
      Type: string
      The previously established password of the eFiling User
filingGUID
      Type: string
      The GSCCCA assigned package identifier for which status is to be obtained

Return Value

Type: string
A XML string that represents a well-formed PRIA response envelope conveying the status of
the submitted request and package (if found).

Remarks

1) The filer is identified by the user id and password provided with the method invocation. The status can only be obtained for filings submitted by the filer identified.

2) The Filing GUID is the GSCCCA system generated identifier that was returned in the **PACKAGE._Identifier** attribute of the original submission request

3) The Filing GUID must be well formed. Supplying a nonconforming GUID will result in an error message being returned.

4) If the filing identified by the filingGUID cannot be found, an error message is generated.

5) If the filing identified by the filingGUID is found, the status of the filing is returned

RetrieveRecordedPackage METHOD

Syntax

```
public string RetrieveRecordedPackage(string userid, string password, string filingGUID)
```

Parameters

userID
      Type: string
      The previously established userID of the eFiling User
Passwd
      Type: string
      The previously established password of the eFiling User
filingGUID
      Type: string
      The GSCCCA assigned package identifier for the recorded document being requested

Return Value

Type: string
A XML string that represents a well-formed PRIA response envelope conveying the recorded filing if the filing exists and has in fact been recorded.

Remarks

1) The filer is identified by the user id and password provided with the method invocation. The document can only be obtained by the filer who originally submitted it.

2) The Filing GUID is the GSCCCA system generated identifier that was returned in the **PACKAGE._Identifier** attribute of the original submission request

3) The Filing GUID must be well formed. Supplying a nonconforming GUID will result in an error message being returned.

4) If the filing identified by the filingGUID cannot be found, an error message is generated.

5) The requested document must be in the "Recorded" state. If the requested filing is not in the "Recorded" state, an error message will be generated.

6) The response is guaranteed to contain a single **PACKAGE** element with one or more **PRIA_DOCUMENT** elements, equal to the number of **PRIA_DOCUMENT**s previously submitted. Each **PRIA_DOCUMENT** element will always contain one or more **EMBEDDED_FILE** elements. The embedded file will convey the filed document with any recording information that was stamped at the time of acceptance.

7) When accepting a document, the county must provide a completed **RECORDING_ENDORSEMENT** element for each **PRIA_DOCUMENT**. As such, the filer can be guaranteed that this element will be included in the response. At a minimum, the county must provide the following information within the **ENDORSEMENT** element:
    a. Attribute: **_Volume**
    b. Attribute: **_VolumeType**

c. Attribute: **_RecordedDateTime**

d. Element: **_VOLUME_PAGE**

8) When accepting a document, the county must provide fee information in the **_FEES** element of the **RECORDING_ENDORSEMENT**. As such, the filer can be guaranteed that the **_FEES** element will be included in the response. At a minimum, the **_TotalAmount** attribute of the **_FEES** element must be provided by the county. Fee detail, if any, can be found in one or more **_RECORDING_FEE** elements within the **_FEES element**.

RetrieveRejectedPackage METHOD

Syntax

```
public string RetrieveRecordedPackage(string userid, string password, string filingGUID)
```

Parameters

```
userID
        Type: string
        The previously established userID of the eFiling User
Passwd
        Type: string
        The previously established password of the eFiling User
filingGUID
        Type: string
        The GSCCCA assigned package identifier for the rejected document being requested
```

Return Value

```
Type: string
A XML string that represents a well-formed PRIA response envelope conveying the rejected
filing status and rejection reasons if the filing exists and has in fact been rejected.
```

Remarks

1) The filer is identified by the user id and password provided with the method invocation. The document can only be obtained by the filer who originally submitted it.

2) The Filing GUID is the GSCCCA system generated identifier that was returned in the **PACKAGE._Identifier** attribute of the original submission request

3) The Filing GUID must be well formed. Supplying a nonconforming GUID will result in an error message being returned.

4) If the filing identified by the filingGUID cannot be found, an error message is generated.

5) The requested document must be in the "Rejected" state. If the requested filing is not in the "Rejected" state, an error message will be generated.

6) The response generated will contain an empty **PACKAGE** element with only the **PACKAGE._Identifier** attribute set.

7) When rejecting a filing, the county is required to provide at least one reason for the rejection.

As such, the response is guaranteed to contain at least one **RECORDING_ERROR** element within then **STATUS** element of the response.

GetDocumentTypes METHOD

Syntax

```
public string GetDocumentTypes(string userid, string passwd, int countyFIPS)
```

Parameters

```
userID
      Type: string
      The previously established userID of the eFiling User
Passwd
      Type: string
      The previously established password of the eFiling User


countyFIPS
      Type: int
      The FIPS code assigned to the county for which the list of accepted document types is
      to be obtained.
```

Return Value

```
Type: string
A XML string that represents a well-formed PRIA response envelope conveying a list of
document types accepted for the county specified.
```

Remarks

1) The filer is identified by the user id and password provided with the method invocation. The document can only be obtained by the filer who originally submitted it.
2) The county FIPS code must match one of the GA FIPS code. Invalid or missing county codes will result in an error message being returned.
3) Not all counties participate in eFiling of all document types. Some counties may not participate in any eFiling through the GSCCCA portal.
4) If the county specified does not participate in eFiling of any document types, the response will contain an empty **PACKAGE** element. An empty **PACKAGE** element indicates that the county does not accept any document types.
5) If the county DOES accept one or more filing types, the response will contain a PACKAGE element with one or more **PRIA_DOCUMENT** elements. Each PRIA_DOCUMENT element will be empty except for the **RecordableDocumentType** attribute. This attribute will name of the document type that is accepted as defined by PRIA. NOTE: There is a special type that can be returned called "ANY", which is not a PRIA defined type. If a submitter system expects only valid

PRIA types to be returned, their system should be adjusted to expect "ANY" as a potential value. A document type of "ANY" indicates that the county will make an attempt to receive/record any real estate document type submitted.

6) Some counties may accept a document type of "OTHER". Please note that when submitting a document with the **RecordableDocumentType** attribute set to "OTHER", the **RecordableDocumentTypeOtherDescription** attribute must also contain a value that further describes the document.

Exception Handling and Service Interruptions

Care has been given in the implementation of all web methods to handle most predictable errors and system exceptions. Generally speaking, business rule violations are intercepted and reported back as errors within the response **STATUS** element. System errors on the GSCCCA server, such as temporary service interruption, are expected to be very rare. However, system errors due tend to occur from time to time and where such errors can be anticipated, the web methods will intercept such exceptions and report the issue in the **STATUS** element of the response. If the system error prevented the successful execution of an action, the status message may indicate that a call to GSCCCA technical support will be necessary. ALL ERRORS that can be anticipated are logged in the GSCCCA database when they occur and GSCCCA technical support staff is alerted.

It is unlikely that an exception will be raised from the web method to the consuming application unless there is a basic access with the method call itself. However, each method does not include a catch-all error handler and it is possible, though unlikely, that an unhandled exception will be raised from the web method itself. It is recommended that your application consider this in its design, and that the GSCCCA technical support department is notified whenever such errors occur.

Generally, if a system error occurs that prevents an action from being performed, it is safe to simply retry the transaction. If the system error occurred during the submission of a new filing, the internal duplicate prevention should prevent the same filing from being submitted twice. Therefore, it is safe to resubmit a document in the unlikely event that a submit() call fails.

Minimum Data Requirements

For its initial implementation, the GSCCCA has adopted a LEVEL II approach to real estate eFiling. Essentially, the document is presented as a digital representation and can stand alone without other meta data. The GSCCCA does require a minimum set of meta data to be included as previously discussed, such as the receiving party identifier and the document type.

Certain data fields, like **GRANTOR** and **GRANTEE** are REQUIRED by the PRIA 2.4.1 standard as part of the **PRIA_DOCUMENT** element when it is included in a **PACKAGE**. This requirement is enforced by GSCCCA as part of schema validation, though it is not anticipate that these data fields will be used DIRECTLY by the county clerk's office. Georgia has defined a statewide indexing standard that must be used when indexing such information, and such indexing must be done by individuals well versed in these standards. It is unlikely that data submitted through the GSCCCA portal will be compliant with Georgia Indexing standards.

Any data field required by the PRIA 2.4.1 standard in order to pass schema validation must be included in the request. However, since most of these fields are unused, it is permissible to either include actual data or to leave the data empty (""). Though not required, it may be good practice to include as much information as is available in the PRIA request to help the clerk verify and validate the document to be recorded.