User Guide

PAePay® Bail

Last Updated: 3/27/2024

https://ujsportal.pacourts.us

Table of Contents

Section 1: Introduction

Welcome

This user guide details the steps needed to make an online bail payment using PAePay on the Pennsylvania Unified Judicial System (UJS) Web Portal. PAePay on the UJS Web Portal allows the public to securely pay bail set on a defendant's case in either the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Common Pleas or Magisterial District courts. In Philadelphia County, only Municipal Court cases are eligible for PAePay bail payments.

This payment system currently accepts case payments for participating counties only. Visa, MasterCard, Discover, American Express and ATM/Debit cards are accepted for payment. For more information on terms and conditions, please refer to the Disclaimer and Terms & Conditions available on the website.

Site Requirements

The Pennsylvania Unified Judicial System (UJS) Web Portal requires a current web browser with JavaScript and cookies enabled. Other browsers without JavaScript and cookies enabled will see graphical errors or may be denied access completely. Due to the technology used in creating this site, using **Google Chrome** provides the most satisfying user experience. Also, the images that appear in this guide may vary slightly in appearance depending on the browser used and the version.

The reporting and printing functions on the site require Adobe Reader. Please be advised that pop-up blockers may prevent pages and reports from opening properly.

Bail Payor vs. Surety

When paying bail for a defendant in Pennsylvania, it is important to understand the difference between a payor and a surety.

As a bail payor, you give up your rights to claim the return of your money under the Pennsylvania Rules of Criminal Procedure. However, you are also **NOT** responsible for:

- The defendant appearing in court.

- The defendant following their non-monetary bail conditions.

- Paying any additional bail money ordered by the court.

To be eligible to have your bail payment returned, minus any court fees allowed by law, you must become the bail surety for the defendant. However, as bail surety, you **ARE** responsible for:

- The defendant appearing in court.

- The defendant following their non-monetary bail conditions.

- Paying any additional bail money ordered by the court.

When using PAePay to make a bail payment, you are automatically posting bail as a payor. If you wish to become the bail surety, you must contact the court or prison where the defendant is held. They will provide instructions on where to go to complete the bail paperwork required to become the surety.

Note: In Philadelphia County, to become the surety, you must appear in person with a valid government-issued identification card at the Stout Justice Center. The name on the ID must match the name on the credit card used to make the PAePay bail payment in order to complete the surety paperwork.

Bail Payments and Warrants or Other Detainers

Before starting the PAePay bail payment process, it is highly recommended that you contact the court or prison where the defendant is held to determine if there are any reasons why the person in custody may continue to be detained, even if the bail is paid in full. Outstanding warrants or detainers may prevent the person in custody from being released.

Fees and Transaction Limits

There is a 2.75% convenience fee applied to each PAePay payment. With one exception, bail can only be paid on a single case per transaction. The exception is a blanket bond, which is when the judge orders bail that covers multiple cases. Blanket bonds can only be issued by court order.

PAePay Bail transactions cannot exceed $20,000. This limit does not include convenience fees or other county specific bail assessments. If the bail set exceeds $20,000, you may make additional transactions as your credit card limit permits. Each transaction is subject to the 2.75% convenience fee.

Note: Philadelphia County charges an additional $10 - $20 bail processing fee for each bail record (a case or blanket bond, not per PAePay bail transaction).

Navigation

Open your internet browser and enter the following web address:

https://ujsportal.pacourts.us

To access the PAePay Bail home page, hover your mouse over Pay Online in the Navigation Bar at the top of the page and click on Bail in the menu.

Section 2: Searching for Cases

After clicking Bail in the Navigation menu, you are automatically taken to the Pay Bail Online – Search page. The first step in making an online payment is to find the cases plans where payment is needed. Once found, you will be able to add it to a shopping cart, specify the amount of the payment, and continue to checkout.

This section includes:

Selecting the Search Type

The Pay Bail Online – Search page is used to choose how you would like to search for the case for the defendant. The type of search you choose should depend on the information you have available for the bail you need to pay.

Available search options include:

- Searching by docket number

- Searching by name

Searching by Docket Number

A docket number is a unique number assigned by the court to a defendant's case. To search by the case docket number, perform the following steps:

1. **Select Docket Number from the Search By dropdown on the Pay Bail Online – Search page.** The Docket Number field displays. Required fields on the search page are indicated with an asterisk (*) and must have a value entered or selected before beginning a search.

2. **Enter the Docket Number:**

   a. If you have the entire docket number available, you can enter it in the Docket Number fields (ex. Court of Common Please: CP-10-CR-0000183-2020; Magisterial District Court: MJ-51303-CR-0000027-2022). You must enter the docket number exactly as it was provided to you, including the dashes. The alphabet characters in the number can be entered in either upper case or lower case.

   OR

   b. If you do not have the entire docket number:

      i. Select the Build Docket Number checkbox. The Build Docket Number fields display.

      ii. Select the Court Type.

      iii. Select the court County. This is the county in which the case was heard. The list is limited to the counties that accept PAePay payments for bail.

      iv. Enter the Case Number. This is a number up to seven digits long. If you do not know this number, you will not be able to search by docket number. You may contact the court in which the case is filed in order to obtain the number, or try a different Search By option such as by name. For more information on using other search types, see *Selecting the Search Type* on page 6.

      v. Enter the Year Filed. This is the year that the case was entered into the court system. You must enter a four-digit year (ex. 2010).

3. **Once the Docket Number or all of the fields in the Build Docket Number fields are filled, click SEARCH.** If a required field was not filled out, a message displays indicating the fields that must be completed before performing the search. Add information to the missing fields and click SEARCH again.

4. **To continue, go to** *Search Results and adding to the Shopping Cart* **on page 9.**

Searching by Name

To search by the name of the defendant, perform the following steps:

1. **Select Participant Name from the Search By dropdown on the Pay Bail Online – Search page.** The participant search fields display. Required fields on the search page are indicated with an asterisk (*) and must have a value entered or selected before beginning a search.

2. **Select the Court Type.**

3. **Enter a Last Name** and **First Name.** These can be entered in either upper case or lower case.

4. **In addition, at least one other field must be entered or selected in order to perform a search.** When entering information in these fields, use the following guidelines:

   - If entering a Date of Birth, which is the recommended additional criteria, you must enter two digits for the month and day and four digits for the year (ex. 01/03/2010). You can also click on the mini-calendar icon to select the date from a calendar.

   - For the County, the list is limited to those that accept PAePay payments for bail. You must select the county where the defendant's case is filed.

   - The Case Types listed in the dropdown are limited to the types of cases where bail can be paid online using PAePay. A list of the participating counties and types of case types that can be paid through PAePay Bail is available by clicking the link above the search fields.

   - Zip Codes must have five numbers. Only numbers can be entered for the zip code.

Note: Some internet browsers may not have an option to display mini calendars.

   - The Prison Facility field is only enabled if a County is selected. The list is limited to the available facilities in the county accepting PAePay payments for bail.

   - If using the Prisoner Number, you must enter it exactly as it was provided to you.

- For the filed date range, if you know the exact date the case was filed in the court office, enter the same date in both the Filed Start Date and Filed End Date fields. Otherwise, enter a range that includes the most likely date the case was filed. This range of dates cannot be more than 90 days. You must enter two digits for the month and day and four digits for the year (ex. 01/03/2010). You can also click on the mini-calendar icon to select the dates from a calendar.

Note: Some internet browsers may not have an option to display mini calendars.

5. **Click SEARCH.** If a required field was not filled out, a message displays indicating the fields that must be completed before performing the search. Add information to the missing fields and click SEARCH again.

6. **To continue, go to** *Search Results and adding to the Shopping Cart* **on page 9.**

Search Results and adding to the Shopping Cart

If no results match your search criteria, you will receive a message that no results were found.

If results do appear, they will be returned in a grid below the SEARCH and CLEAR buttons. Review the results to determine if the case you need has been returned in the search.

If no results match your search criteria or the case you need is not found, choose one of the following options:

- Change the information selected or entered for any of the fields and click SEARCH. A new search will be performed.

- Click CLEAR, select or enter information in the fields again and click SEARCH. A new search will be performed.

- Change the Search By option and try another type of search. For more information, see *Selecting the Search Type* on page 6.

Troubleshooting: If the case you need is still not found, refer to *I can't find the case I need*: on page 18.

If the case you need is listed in the grid, several functions are available:

- Viewing the Docket Sheet for each case that appears. (Not available for all case types.)

- Viewing the Court Summary Report for each case that appears. (Not available for all case types.)

- Adding the case to the shopping cart.

Viewing the Docket Sheet

Docket sheets can be useful in determining if a case in the grid is the one on which you intend to make a bail payment. This is especially useful when the defendant has a common name. To view a docket sheet, click on Docket Sheet 🄳 icon in the far-right column for the case.

The docket sheet opens in a new window with Adobe Reader. In some internet browsers, the docket sheet may open in a new tab. Once open, it can be viewed on the screen, saved, or printed. When finished, close the window or tab displaying the docket sheet to continue.

Viewing the Court Summary Report

In addition to a docket sheet, some case types will also have a Court Summary Report available. Court Summary Reports will display information about all of a defendant's cases. To view the Court Summary Report, click on the Court Summary 🏛 icon in the far-right column for the case.

The Court Summary Report opens in a new window with Adobe Reader. In some Internet browsers, the Court Summary Report may open in a new tab. Once open, it can be viewed on the screen, saved, or printed. When finished, close the window or tab displaying the Court Summary Report to continue.

Adding a Case to the Shopping Cart

In order to make a payment on a case, it must be added to the shopping cart.

To add a case to the shopping cart, select the radio button appearing in the first column for the case on which you need to pay bail. Click ADD TO CART.

The case is added to the shopping cart where you will specify the payment amount and then continue to checkout. For more information on using the shopping cart, see *Section 3: Making Payments* on page 12.

Section 3: Making Payments

After selecting the case on which to pay bail and clicking ADD TO CART, you will be taken to the shopping cart page. The shopping cart provides the ability to specify the amount to pay on the case. After specifying the bail payment amount, you will proceed to checkout where the payment information is entered.

This section includes:

Shopping Cart

The shopping cart displays the case selected for a bail payment. The following displays: the participant name, docket number of the case, the total amount set for bail, percentage of the bail ordered (if applicable), and the amount of bail that needs to be paid (Cash Bail Amount) to secure release of the defendant if no other detainers exist. Next to the total bail amount listed in the table is the Amount to Pay column.

To make a bail payment on the case in the shopping cart, perform the following steps:

1. **Enter the amount you intend to pay in the Amount to Pay column.** You do not need to enter the entire Cash Bail Amount displayed. However, the defendant cannot be released until the amount shown is paid in full. If multiple parties are paying bail for the defendant, or you will be making multiple transactions because the amount exceeds $20,000 or the limit of your credit card, only enter the amount you intend to pay on the current transaction. Also, the full amount of any county bail assessments are always added to the first payment made on bail.

2. **Review the terms and conditions below the grid.**

3. **Select the checkbox next to "I have read and agree to the conditions".**

4. **Click CHECKOUT.** If the amount you entered is less than the amount due, you will receive a message that you are potentially checking out with an underpayment. If needed, adjust the Amount to Pay at the top of the page.

Otherwise, to continue and pay less than the amount due, click CHECKOUT again. To continue, see *Checking Out*.

Checking Out

After specifying the bail payment amount for the defendant and clicking CHECKOUT, you will need to proceed to PAePay Checkout screen. This will initiate the process of gathering information needed for payment, including payment method, billing address, and contact information.

To process your payment, perform the following steps:

1. **In the grid, verify the case and defendant displayed is correct.** Also verify that the amount you intend to pay on this transaction is reflected in the Amount to Pay column. The table also displays county fees (if any), the convenience fee, and your total payment amount. If you need to change the Amount to Pay, click CANCEL.

2. The fields below the payment grid are used to collect information about the person making the bail payment. If you are making a bail payment for someone else, do not enter the defendant information in these fields or your payment will be denied. All the information must be recorded EXACTLY the way it appears with your bank or credit card company or the payment will be denied. Check your latest bank or credit card statement to ensure you enter the information exactly as it is on file with the card issuer.

   a. **Enter your First Name.** This must entered exactly as it appears on your bank or credit card statement, including any spaces, dashes, or other punctuation or capitalizations.

   b. **Enter your Last Name.** This must entered exactly as it appears on your bank or credit card statement, including any spaces, dashes, or other punctuation or capitalizations.

   c. **If your address is in the United States, you can skip the Address Location field, which defaults to United States.** Otherwise, if you reside outside of the United States, select Other from the dropdown.

d. **For the Address, enter your full address.** A second line is provided for longer addresses and can also be used to specify an apartment number. Ensure the address lines are entered exactly as they appear on the statement for the bank or credit card, including any punctuations or abbreviations (or lack thereof) used for the street name (Street vs. St., Avenue vs Ave. Boulevard vs Blvd. etc).

e. **For the City, enter the full name of the city or town as it appears on the statement for your bank or credit card.**

f. **For the State, select the state.** You can type the first letter of your state name to jump the list to the state names beginning with that letter. If you selected an Address Location of Other, enter a Territory instead. Either of these must appear as they do on the statement for your bank or credit card.

g. **For the Zip Code, enter a valid US postal zip code.** If you selected an Address Location of Other, enter a valid Postal Code for your country instead. Either of these must be entered as they appear on the statement for your bank or credit card.

h. **If you selected an Address Location of Other, select your Country from the dropdown.** You can type the first letter of your country name to jump the list to the country names beginning with that letter.

i. **Enter the Phone Number where you can be reached in case there is a problem with your payment.**

j. **Enter your Email Address.** This is the email address where the confirmation number and payment information will be sent once the payment is processed. Record the email address accurately. Without a confirmation number, you will not be able to inquire about a payment if you have a question.

3. Review all of the information you recorded for accuracy and completeness. **If everything is correct, click CONTINUE.**

4. The payment information screen displays. The screen is used to securely gather your payment information.

a. **Verify the Email address displayed, which is the same as you entered on the checkout page.** If it is inaccurate, click Edit and update it.

b. **Enter the full Card Number.** Do not enter any dashes or spaces between numbers.

c. **Enter the CVV, which is the security code on the back of your credit card.** The code has four digits for American Express cards and three digits for all others.

d. **Enter the month and year of the expiration date of the credit card.** Enter the date with two digits for the month and year (ex. 08/24).

e. **Ensure the name displayed matches exactly as it appears on your credit card.** If the name displayed is incorrect, you must click the X in the upper right corner to return to the PAePay Checkout screen and make any changes before continuing. If the name does not match what your credit card or bank has on file, your payment may be declined.

f. **Review the Billing Address displayed, which is what you entered on the Checkout screen.** If the billing address displayed is incorrect, you must click the X in the upper right corner to return to the PAePay Checkout screen and make any changes before continuing. If the Billing Address does not match what your credit card or bank has on file, your payment may be declined.

g. **Select the "I agree to the Terms and Conditions" checkbox.** If needed, you may click on the Terms and Conditions link to view them before accepting.

h. **Click the PAY button which also displays the total payment amount.**

5. **Your payment information will now be transmitted to your bank or credit card company.** Do not click the Back button in your browser or close the browser during this process. When completed, you will receive notification that the transaction was accepted or declined:

   a. If the credit card is declined for insufficient funds, you will be returned to the PAePay Checkout page. Click PAY NOW to return to the payment information page where you can enter different card information. You can also close the browser to cancel making a payment at this time and clear the shopping cart.

   b. If the credit card is declined due to card AVS details mismatch, verify all of the information you entered for the Billing Address displayed on the payment information screen. Also verify how the cardholder's name is

displayed. After correcting any information so that it displays exactly as it appears on the bank statement for your bank or credit card, click PAY again.

c. If the credit card is declined due to a CVV details mismatch, check the number on the back of your credit card and re-enter the CVV on the payment information screen. Click PAY again.

d. If the credit or ATM/debit card is accepted, you will be taken to the Receipt page.

Tip: If your credit card is repeatedly declined, see *My credit card continues to be declined. I'm certain there are sufficient funds. What can I do?* on page 19.

6. **Printing a copy of the Receipt page for your records is recommended.** This is not an official receipt of your payment for the court. For more information, see *Is the Receipt page my official receipt?* on page 19.

7. **It is highly recommended that you contact the court or prison to advise them that the payment was made so the defendant can be released if all other conditions of bail have been satisfied and there are no additional detainers.**

Section 4: Additional Information

Terminology

Court Summary Report
An official report from the court that provides information on all of a defendant's cases statewide. Contents include defendant information, a list of cases and their status, case information, attorney information, last action, and a list of all charges and dispositions.

Docket Sheet
An official report from the court that provides a detailed statement of actions and filings for a single case. Contents include case information, related cases, a history of calendar events/court dates, a list of charges, docket entries, case financial information, and disposition and sentencing information if the case has been adjudicated.

Shopping Cart
An area of the PAePay Online Case Payments System that stores the cases or payment plans selected for payment until ready to complete the transaction. The shopping cart saves any cases or payment plans selected and payment amounts entered and allows the user of the system to continue to search for and add additional cases that need payment.

Troubleshooting

I can't find the case I need:
If you cannot find your cases, it may be due to one of the following reasons:

- The information being entered for a search cannot be matched to a case in the selected county, or, if searching by docket number, an invalid docket number has been entered.

- Bail on the case has already been paid.

- There is a nebbia order on the case.

- The case has received certain dispositions.

- The defendant is marked as confidential.

- The case is sealed.

- The case is pending expungement.

If you believe one of these situations do not apply to you and you cannot find the case, please contact the court or prison.

Why can't I make a payment on a case?
There may be several reasons why you will be unable to make a payment on a case. These include:

- District courts or court offices reserve the right to restrict individuals from making electronic payments or having electronic payments made on their cases.

- District courts or court offices reserve the right to restrict individual cases from being paid through the PAePay System.

- Bail on the case may have one or more of the following non-monetary conditions: a psychological evaluation requested, surrender passport, surrender or confiscate driver's license, surrender weapons, surrender gun license, or a nebbia order. Contact the bail acceptance unit for further information.

If you believe one of these situations does not apply to you and you cannot find your case, please contact the court or prison.

The defendant has bail set on multiple cases. Can I pay them all at once?
Unless the judge has ordered a bail blanket bond that includes all the cases, you can only pay bail on one case at a time. After receiving your payment confirmation on one case, search for the next case and process another payment, as your credit card allows.

My credit card continues to be declined. I'm certain there are sufficient funds. What can I do?
The most common reasons that a credit card is repeatedly declined is that your credit card company is blocking the transaction. This is usually due to automatic security measures in place with the financial institution. The reasons a security block is placed is wholly at the discretion of the financial institution. Therefore, you must contact the financial institution that issued your credit card in order to resolve the problem.

Is the Receipt page my official receipt?
No. The Receipt page acknowledges or confirms that you have submitted a payment on your credit card using PAePay. The payment processes through your financial institution overnight and is deposited in the bank for the court in which payments were made. The court must then apply the payment to your assessments. Only after the payment is applied to the assessments can an official receipt be generated. Contact the court office where your case is filed to obtain the official receipt.

Can I specify the date on which the payment will be applied?
The date on which an online payment will be applied cannot be specified. The processing of the payment begins as soon as the payment is submitted. As a result, scheduling future payments is not permitted.

I accidentally paid on the wrong case. What can I do?
Contact the court of jurisdiction for the case on which you made a payment. A refund is not guaranteed and the defendant cannot be released until their bail is paid in full.

I accidentally made a payment to state probation/parole fees. What can I do?
You can contact the Pennsylvania Parole Board to inquire about a refund. Contacting them does not guarantee a refund and the defendant cannot be released until their bail is paid in full.

Is my credit card information saved? I need to make additional bail payments.
Credit card information that is entered for online payment will not be saved. You will have to enter your credit card information for each transaction, regardless if you have previously used the PAePay system.