

Registration Processing Times*

The Copyright Office's processing times vary based on a number of factors, including how difficult a claim is to review, whether an applicant submitted a physical deposit, whether the Copyright Office needs to correspond with an applicant, and the number of registration specialists available to review claims. For example, claims take longer to process when applicants submit online claims but do not submit physical deposits when necessary, or when applicants do not fully respond to an examiner's questions. The Office encourages applicants to refer to the *Compendium of U.S. Copyright Office Practices* and the Copyright Office's circulars prior to submitting applications to avoid unnecessary delays and correspondence.

Note: During a lapse of appropriations from October 1 through November 12, 2025, the Office received registration applications, but staff were not able to process them during that time. Since return to normal operations, those applications are being generally processed in the order in which they were received. The effective date of a copyright registration is the day on which an acceptable application, deposit, and fee have all been received in the Copyright Office.

Now that the government has reopened, the Office expects average processing times to increase, though any such increase should be temporary. As the claims affected by the shutdown are examined and closed by staff, processing times are expected to decrease.

For questions, please contact the Public Information Office by phone at (202) 707-3000 or 1-877-476-0778 (toll-free), or online at www.copyright.gov/help. While the Public Information Office can provide information on pending claims, it can take the Copyright Office as long as the outer ranges set forth below to issue decisions on whether to register claims.

The average processing time for all claims is 2.5 months. The Office had to communicate with applicants on twenty-seven percent of all claims to resolve questions about submitted claims before rendering a decision. For information on the processing times and correspondence rates for specific types of applications, see the below charts.

eService Claims: online application with uploaded digital deposit (approximately 86% of all applications)

Claims that DO NOT require correspondence (approximately 73% of all eService claims and 63% of all claims)

 **average 1.9 months**

(but claims can range from less than 1 month to 3.8 months)

Claims WITH correspondence (approximately 27% of all eService claims and 23% of all claims)

 **average 3.7 months**

(but claims can range from less than 1 month to 8.1 months)

Deposit Ticket Claims: online application with mail-in physical deposit (approximately 13% of all applications)

Claims that DO NOT require correspondence (approximately 76% of all Deposit Ticket claims and 10% of all claims)

 **average 2.4 months**

(but claims can range from less than 1 month to 6.5 months)

Claims WITH correspondence (approximately 24% of all Deposit Ticket claims and 3% of all claims)

 **average 4.4 months**

(but claims can range from less than 1 month to 10.6 months)

Mail Claims: application by paper form submission (approximately 1% of all applications)

Claims that DO NOT require correspondence (approximately 50% of all Mail claims and less than 1% of all claims)

 **average 4.2 months**

(but claims can range from less than 1 month to 13.7 months)

Claims WITH correspondence (approximately 50% of all Mail claims and less than 1% of all claims)

 **average 6.7 months**

(but claims can range from less than 1 month to 16.8 months)

* Processing times for cases closed April 1, 2025 – September 30, 2025.

Registration Processing Times FAQs

How Does the Copyright Office Measure Processing Times?

The Copyright Office measures processing times from the time the Office receives an appropriate application, the correct filing fee, and a deposit containing the work being registered until the time when the registration decision has been made. Claims that are received without a deposit, correct application, or full payment will have a delayed registration decision, which will delay the processing of the claim.

How long does the registration process take, and when will I receive my certificate?

The amount of time needed to examine a claim and issue a certificate varies depending on a number of factors. These factors may include the complexity of your claim, the Office's available resources when your claim is received, and the total number of claims that are currently pending with the Copyright Office. Processing times vary depending on whether you submitted your claim through the electronic registration system or sent it to the Office by mail. Processing times also vary depending on whether there are problems with your claim, and whether the Office must communicate with you to address those issues.

The Office understands that processing times are important to applicants and continues to strive towards making the examination process more efficient.

How can I ensure my claim is processed in a timely manner?

Claims that are submitted electronically are typically processed the fastest. Processing times are typically longer if you submit your application by mail, or if you submit an electronic application and mail your deposit to the Office. Thus, the Office encourages applicants to use the electronic application and upload an electronic copy of your work whenever possible.

Processing times also increase if there are problems or deficiencies with your application, deposit, or filing fee, and if the Office must correspond with you to address these issues. To avoid delays, the Office encourages applicants to refer to the *Compendium of U.S. Copyright Office Practices* and the Copyright Office's circulars when completing your application and prior to submitting your claim.

Once your claim has been filed, you should routinely monitor your email account for messages from the Copyright Office. If you receive an email from the Office you should respond within 45 days after the message was sent, and you should provide a full and complete response to the examiner's questions.

Why is my claim taking longer than the average processing time shown on the Copyright Office's website?

Processing times increase whenever there are problems or deficiencies with an application, deposit, or filing fee, and whenever the Copyright Office must call or write the applicant to address these issues. For example, processing times increase when applicants submit an electronic application, but do not submit the deposit in a timely manner, or when applicants upload an electronic deposit in cases where a physical deposit is required. Processing times also increase when an examiner emails the applicant but does not receive a complete response to his or her questions. While the Office will attempt to solve some problems through correspondence with the applicant, claims with deficiencies or inaccuracies will always take longer to resolve.

Who do I contact with questions?

The Public Information Office can provide general information on your pending claim if you contact them by phone at (202) 707-3000 or 1-877-476-0778 (toll-free), or online at www.copyright.gov/help.