

# WebSurrogate Help Guide

WebSurrogate is a web-based file search and document retrieval solution that provides information on estate proceedings and other filings within New York State Surrogate's Courts.

It is a free service that allows users to search estate files, retrieve associated documents, and view historical estate records that are considered public information.

This Help Guide was developed to provide online assistance with WebSurrogate search functions and features.

Content includes information and instructions, as follows:

- WebSurrogate – Getting Started
- Name Search
- File Search
- Old Index Search
- Index Book Pages
- Will Search
- WebSurrogate FAQ

***For best performance, please use WebSurrogate from a single browser window.***

***Use of multiple windows may skew results.***

## IMPORTANT NOTES ABOUT WEBSURROGATE

### **“NOT PUBLIC” Records**

Guardianship proceedings and files marked confidential by the Surrogate’s Courts are not available for public view within WebSurrogate. When a public search returns a guardianship proceeding or a confidential file record, WebSurrogate will list the file record with basic file information and a label indicating “NOT PUBLIC”. File details, party information, and documents will not be displayed for “NOT PUBLIC” files. Please contact the Surrogate’s Court if more information is needed on a record that is “NOT PUBLIC”.

### **Special Characters**

WebSurrogate does not allow the use of the following special characters in text search fields:

~	Tilda	#	Pound/Number Sign	*	Asterisk
+	Plus Sign	=	Equal Sign	{ }	Brackets
\	Back Slash	“	Double Quotation Marks	< >	Less/Greater Than

If these special characters are entered into a search text field, the system will display a message indicating use of these special characters is not allowed.

### **Names with Apostrophes, Hyphens, and/or Spaces**

When search for names with apostrophes, hyphens, and/or spaces, the results list will only include names that match what was entered in the search field(s).

- If a name is entered WITH an apostrophe, hyphen and/or a space
  - ONLY matching names WITH an apostrophe, hyphen, and/or a space will be listed in the results.
  - Examples - O’Brien, Boscov’s, Ha Ryu, Ann-Marie, Van Buren, etc.
- If a name is entered WITHOUT an apostrophe, hyphen and/or a space
  - ONLY matching names WITHOUT an apostrophe, hyphen, and/or space will be listed in the results.
  - Examples - OBrien, Boscovs, HaRyu, AnnMarie, VanBuren, etc.

### **PLEASE DO NOT USE MULTIPLE WINDOWS**

*For best performance, please use WebSurrogate from a single browser window.*

*Use of multiple windows may skew results*

## I. WebSurrogate Overview

WebSurrogate is a web-based application for public users to:

- Search Surrogate's Court filings and records
- View search results
- View File History, including file details and a list of associated documents
- View available document and record (index) content

Surrogate's Public Search functions include:

- Name Search - search files by Party Name with the option to narrow search by date of death. View file history and associated documents.
- File Search - search files by file number. View file history and associated documents.
- Old Index Search – search historical records (Old Indexes) by file number or file name. View images of available file records.
- Index Book Pages - browse and view available images of pages from Surrogate's Court index books.
- Will Search – search Wills For Safekeeping by Testator name to view a list of matching Will records. Wills For Safe Keeping are not available for public view.

### 1. Terms of Use

WebSurrogate Terms of Use includes the following:

1. This system and all data are the property of the New York State Unified Court System (UCS).
2. Data may not be mined or sold, or used in any pay-for-use application.
3. This site may not be accessed by any automated program ("bot") for the purpose of extracting data for any use.
4. This site may not be directly linked to by any website
5. Unauthorized use or attempted unauthorized use of this system may subject you to appropriate disciplinary action and criminal or civil penalties.
6. Because transcription or other errors may arise when compiling the information provided on this website, users should verify the accuracy of information by consulting original court records or sources. The Unified Court System is not responsible for consequential use of website errors.

WebSurrogate provides links to its Terms of Use on all pages.

### 2. Public Access to Documents

Public Access is restricted to certain documents (and filings) within WebSurrogate per Section 207.64 of the Uniform Rules for the Surrogate's Court. This order seeks to protect confidential personal information by restricting access to certain file records and documents. WebSurrogate includes links to Section 207.64 content from the Welcome and Home pages.

WebSurrogate restricts access to Guardianship proceedings and filings that are marked Confidential by the courts. Basic file information is listed for restricted or Not Public records, but associated file details and document lists may not be viewed.

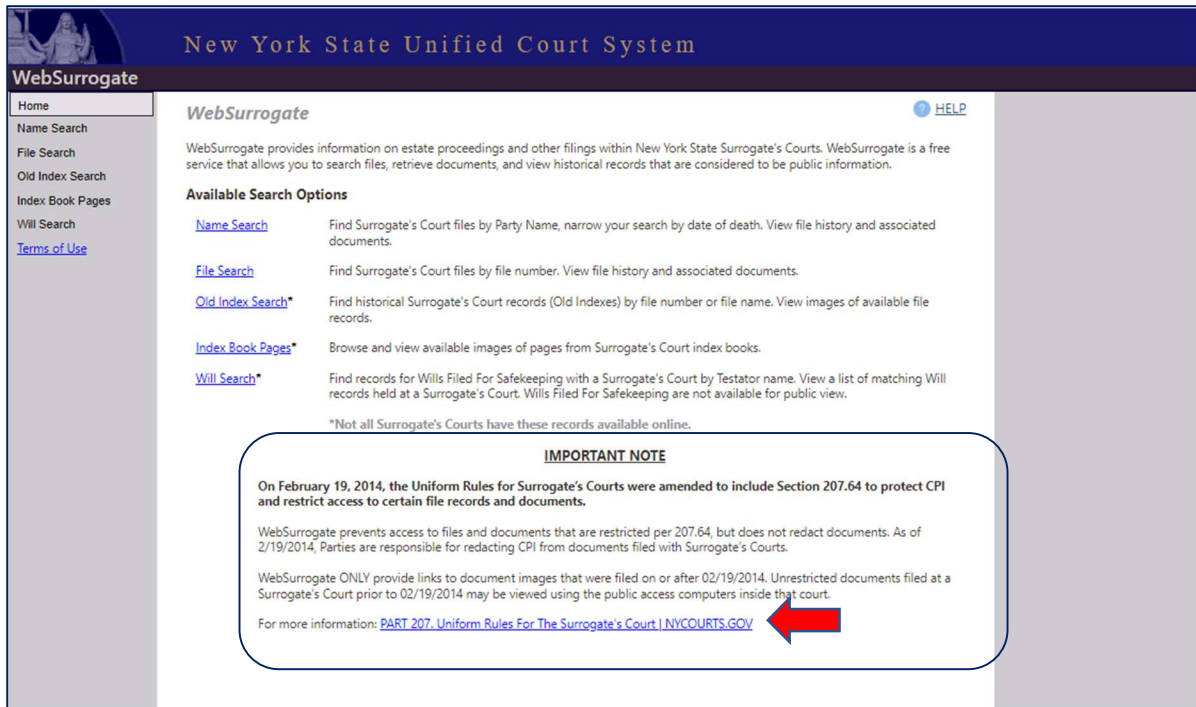
WebSurrogate allows view of file details all other records. File Details include a document listing but does not provide links for all document images. No links are provided for documents that have been restricted by the courts and/or documents that may contain confidential personal information.

Public access to documents is further restricted when searching Surrogate’s court records over the Internet.

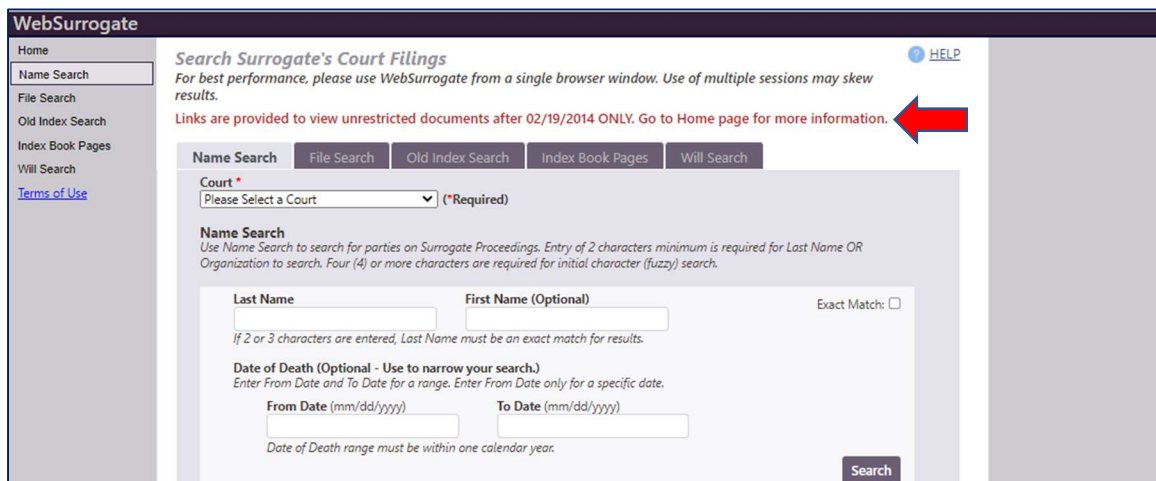
When accessed over the Internet, WebSurrogate ONLY provides links to document images that were filed on or after 02/19/2014.

Unrestricted documents filed prior to 02/19/2014 may be viewed using the public access computers at court locations.

Information about restricting view of older documents, with a link to Section 207.64 content is included on the Welcome and Home pages when WebSurrogate is accessed over the Internet.

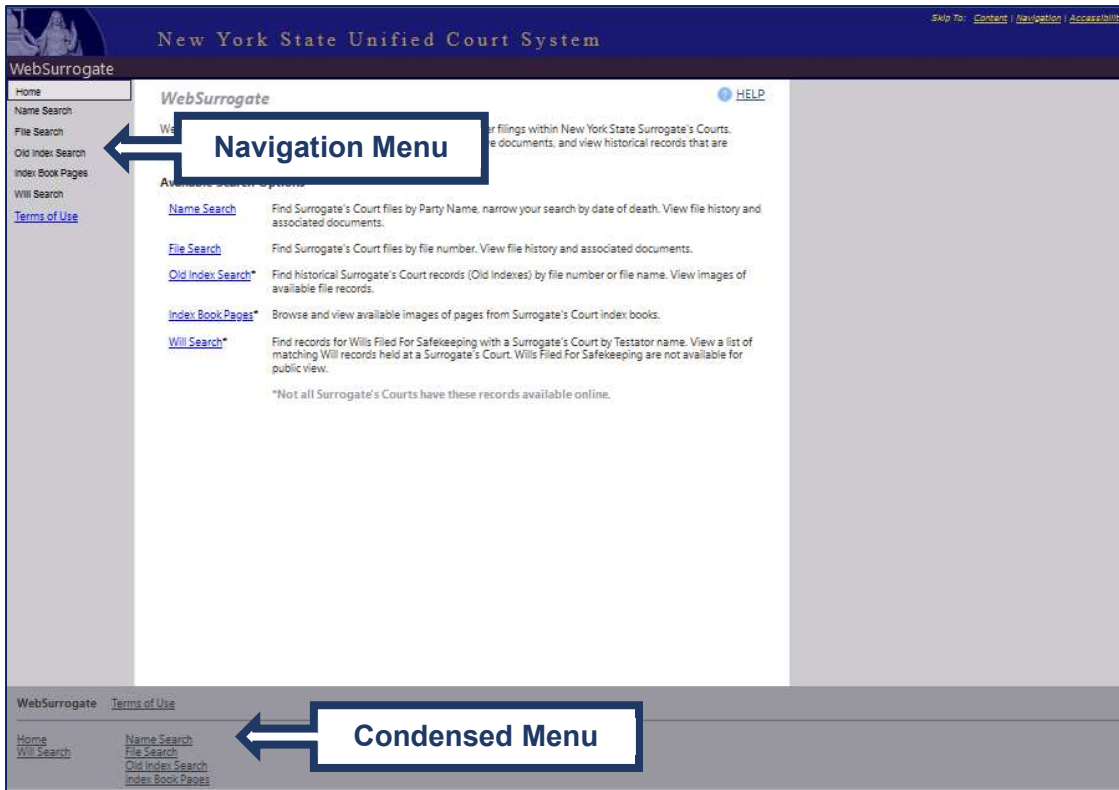


A reference to this policy is displayed on applicable screens:



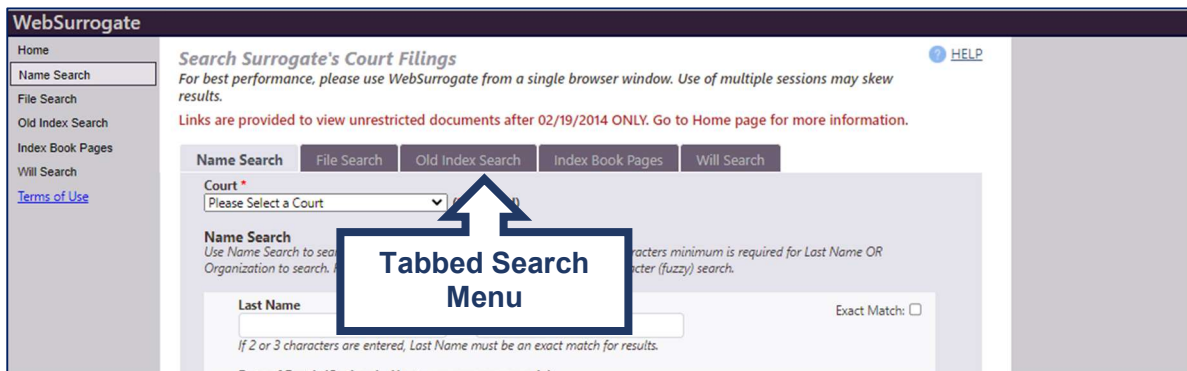
### 3. Navigation

WebSurrogate search functions may be accessed from any page using the Navigation Menu on the left-hand side of the screen and/or the Condensed Menu at the bottom of the screen.



WebSurrogate Navigation

WebSurrogate search screens and results pages include a Tabbed Search Menu that allows easy, inline navigation between search functions.



WebSurrogate Tabbed Search Menu

WebSurrogate results pages list 20 records per page. If results exceed 20 items, a results count is displayed with pagination control below the results list. The pagination control is used to navigate through the results set by selecting specific page numbers, clicking on the forward or back arrows, and/or selecting the First or Last page.

<a href="#">Image</a>	1965-266	ANNA E CLARK	WILL			<a href="#">Details</a>
<a href="#">Image</a>	1982-2472	ANNA E CLARK	WILL			<a href="#">Details</a>
<a href="#">Image</a>	1961-1797	ANNA ELIZABETH CLARK	WILL			<a href="#">Details</a>
<a href="#">Image</a>	1953-1794	ANNA H CLARK	WILL			<a href="#">Details</a>
<a href="#">Image</a>	1940-225	ANNA M CLARK	WILL			<a href="#">Details</a>

Results 21 - 40 **Results Count** **Pagination Control** First < 1 2 3 4 5 > Last

## II. Authentication

WebSurrogate uses CAPTCHA to authenticate public users. CAPTCHA is a type of challenge-response test used in computing to determine whether the user is human. It is used to ensure only human users can pass through in order to prevent data mining by computers (bots).

WebSurrogate requires that users complete a CAPTCHA, as follows:

- Initial Access – A user starts new WebSurrogate session
- Multiple Searches – A user executes 10 searches in a WebSurrogate session
- Time Out – A WebSurrogate session remains open for one hour (60 minutes) with no activity

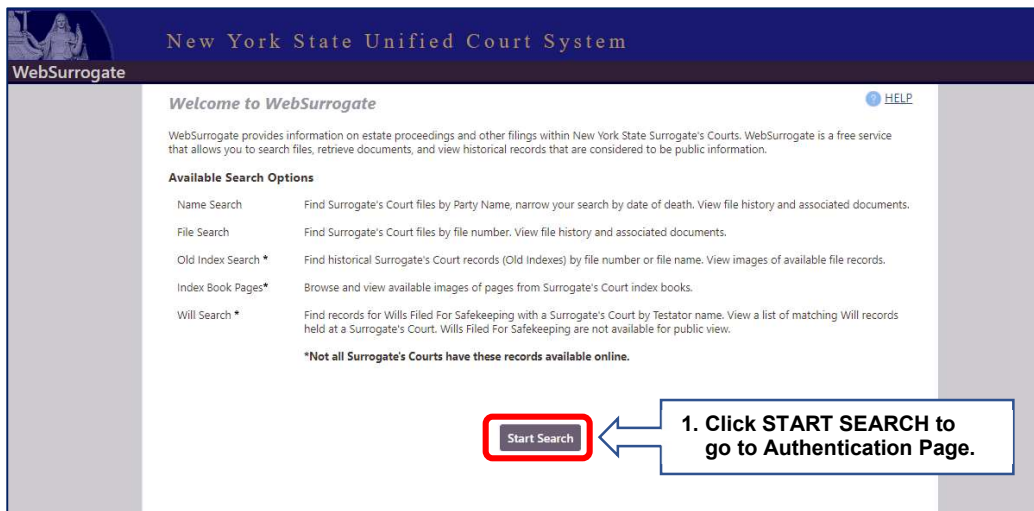
### A. WebSurrogate Welcome Page

The WebSurrogate Welcome Page is displayed at the start of a new WebSurrogate session.

- Initial Access - displayed any time a user launches WebSurrogate from a shortcut/link that open a browser session or navigates to WebSurrogate for the first time in an open browser.
- Time Out – displayed any time a user clicks a menu option, link, or function button on a WebSurrogate page within an open session that has remained idle, with no interaction, for 60+ minutes

The WebSurrogate Welcome Page describes the available search options with a function button to Start Search.

1. A user clicks START SEARCH to open the Authentication Page.



WebSurrogate Welcome Page

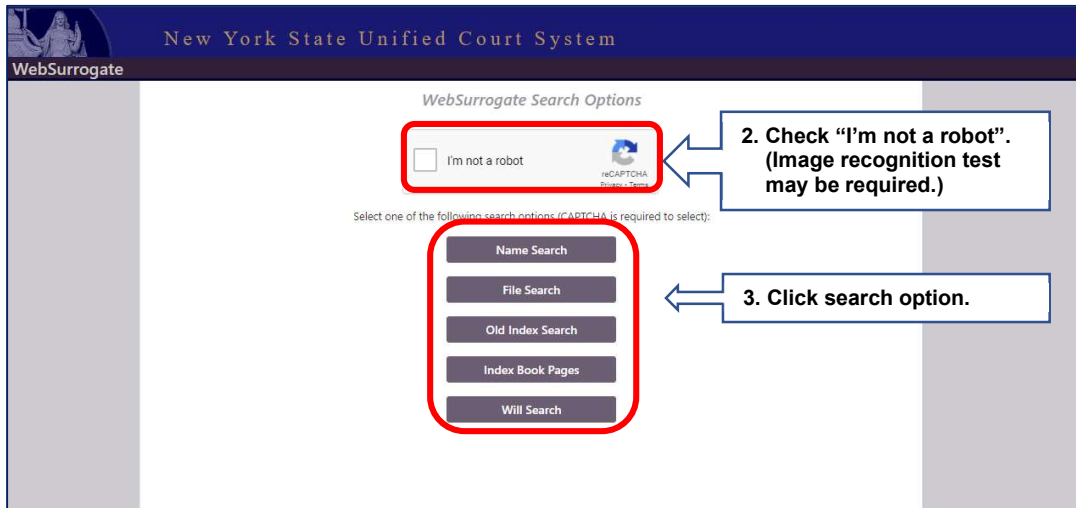
## B. WebSurrogate Authentication Page

The WebSurrogate Authentication is displayed whenever a user is required to complete CAPTCHA based on user interaction, as follows:

- Initial Access – a user clicks START SEARCH from the Welcome Page
  - May occur after Time Out to start a new session
- Multiple Searches – a user clicks SEARCH from any search page after executing 10 searches from one or more search pages in a single WebSurrogate session
  - Page displays the eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) time the user clicks on SEARCH

The Authentication Page requires that a user confirms that he/she is not a robot prior to clicking on one of the available search options.

2. A user checks the “I’m not a robot” check box.
  - a. System may require completion of image recognition test first.
3. A user clicks one of the following search options:
  - a. NAME SEARCH
  - b. FILE SEARCH
  - c. OLD INDEX SEARCH
  - d. INDEX BOOK PAGES
  - e. WILL SEARCH



**WebSurrogate Authentication Page**



### III. WebSurrogate Home Page

The WebSurrogate Home Page provides descriptions and links for all available public search functions and can be accessed at any time by selecting “Home” from the Navigation Menu or the Condensed Menu.



WebSurrogate Home Page

## IV. Name Search

The WebSurrogate Name Search screen allows users to search for estate proceedings by entering a party's last name or organization name. Name Search can be accessed at any time by selecting "Name Search" from the Navigation Menu or the Condensed Menu, and from the Tabbed Search Menu from any search or results page.

The screenshot shows the 'WebSurrogate' interface for 'Search Surrogate's Court Filings'. It features a navigation menu on the left with 'Name Search' selected. The main content area has tabs for 'Name Search', 'File Search', 'Old Index Search', 'Index Book Pages', and 'Will Search'. The 'Name Search' tab is active, showing a 'Court \*' dropdown menu (callout 1), a 'Name Search' section with 'Last Name' and 'First Name (Optional)' fields (callout 2), a 'Date of Death (Optional)' section with 'From Date' and 'To Date' fields, and an 'Organization' field (callout 2). There are also checkboxes for 'Exact Match' and 'Initial Character Search' (callout 3), and 'Search' buttons (callout 4).

**WebSurrogate Name Search Screen**

To complete a **Name Search**:

1. **Select Court.**
2. **Enter Party's name in Last Name OR Organization Name field:**
  - Entry of two (2) characters is required to perform search
    - If 2-3 characters are entered, results will include exact matches ONLY
  - Entry of at least four (4) characters to perform an initial character (fuzzy) search
3. **Enter Optional Information** associated with Last Name entry, as applicable:
  - First Name – no minimum characters
  - Exact Match – check this box to limit results to parties that match Last/First Name value(s) exactly as entered
  - Date of Death
    - Enter From Date for a specific Date of Death
    - Enter From Date and To Date for Date of Death range.
4. **Click associated SEARCH button.**

5. The system will display **Name Search Results Page** with a listing of matching party names with associated file record information.

**NOTE: The system will stay on the Name Search page and display a message if an issue is encountered with the search or the results set:**

- Submitted search does not meet requirements
- Search returns no results or finds too many matches (Results > 1000)

#### A. Name Search Results

The WebSurrogate Name Search Results page lists all party names that match the parameters entered on the Name Search page. The search results page includes:

- **Name Search parameters** with values for current search, as applicable:
  - **Court** Name
  - **Party** Name (characters entered)
    - Last Name, First Name for person
    - Organization Name for organization
  - **Date of Death** – single (FROM) date or date range, if entered
  - Functions to **MODIFY SEARCH** or start **NEW SEARCH**
- **Results List** containing party records with name values that match current Name Search parameters. Information listed for matching party name records, as available:
  - Basic Party information
    - **Full Name** – Last Name, Suffix, First Name, Middle Name OR Organization name
    - **AKA** – Y indicates name is an alias; N indicates primary name for Party
    - **Role** – role indicated for the party record associated with file
    - **Date of Death (DoD)** – Death Date for Party listed.
  - Basic file Information associated with party record
    - **File #** - File number assigned by Surrogate's Court
      - Includes link to open File History (See File History below)
    - **File Date** – date proceeding was filed with Surrogate's Court
    - **File Name** – name of record assigned to proceeding
    - **Proceeding** – name of the type of proceeding
- The Results List is sorted alphabetically by Full Name (Last Name then First Name) and then by File Number (numeric)
  - Click on the column heading to sort the results list by:
    - File#
    - File Name

Name Search

- Full Name
- Date of Death

**Click heading to sort by:**  
File# File Name  
DOD Full Name

**Click File# link to view File History**

**Click Modify Search or New Search to return to Name Search page**

**Public Access is not permitted for one or more files returned with your search.**  
Please see court staff if more information is needed on a file marked NOT PUBLIC.

**Search Surrogate's Court Filings**  
For best performance, please use WebSurrogate from a single browser window. Use of multiple sessions may skew results.

Name Search | File Search | Old Index Search | Index Book Pages | Will Search

**Search Results**  
Court: Albany County Surrogate's Court  
Party Name: perkins

Click on File # to view File History. Click on column heading to sort

File #	File Date	File Name	Proceeding	AKA	Role	DOD
<a href="#">2005-631/A</a>	07/06/2005	Alice C Jackson	TRUSTEE-APPOINTMENT OF TESTAMENTARY	Perkins, Alice M	N TRUSTEE	
<a href="#">2005-631/B</a>	02/01/2007	Alice C Jackson	JUDICIAL SETTLEMENT OF FINAL ACCOUNT	Perkins, Alice M	N BENEFICIARY	
<a href="#">2006-691</a>	07/12/2006	Margaret H Perkins	PROBATE & PRELIMINARY PETITIONS	Perkins, Margaret H	N DECEDENT	04/15/2006
<a href="#">2008-524</a>	06/23/2008	Mary G Perkins	ADMINISTRATION PETITION	Perkins, Anthony	N DISTRIBUTE	
<a href="#">2008-524</a>	06/23/2008	Mary G Perkins	ADMINISTRATION PETITION	Perkins, Chester	N DISTRIBUTE	
<a href="#">2008-524</a>	06/23/2008	Mary G Perkins	ADMINISTRATION PETITION	Perkins, Mary G	N DECEDENT	03/13/2002
<a href="#">2008-524/A</a>	08/31/2017	Mary G Perkins	LIMITED ADMINISTRATION	Perkins Jr, Chester	N DISTRIBUTE	
<a href="#">2008-524/A</a>	08/31/2017	Mary G Perkins	LIMITED ADMINISTRATION	Perkins, Mary G	N DECEDENT	03/13/2002
<a href="#">2008-710</a>	08/20/2008	Darrin J Willingham	Guardianship	NOT PUBLIC		

[Modify Search](#) | [New Search](#)

**WebSurrogate Name Search Results Screen**

- If a Name Search returns one or more proceedings that are confidential, only basic file information will be listed for that item.
  - The system will display a message
  - No link to File History (details) will be provided
  - No Party information will be provided
  - "NOT PUBLIC" will be listed for Full Name value

**Public Access is not permitted for one or more files returned with your search.**  
Please see court staff if more information is needed on a file marked NOT PUBLIC.

**Search Surrogate's Court Filings**  
For best performance, please use WebSurrogate from a single browser window. Use of multiple sessions may skew results.

Name Search | File Search | Old Index Search | Index Book Pages | Will Search

**Search Results**  
Court: Monroe County Surrogate's Court  
Party Name: pierce, s  
Date of Death:

[Modify Search](#) | [New Search](#)

Click on File # to view File History. Click on column heading to sort by File #, File Name, Full Name, or Date of Death (DOD).

File #	File Date	File Name	Proceeding	Full Name	DOD
<a href="#">1984G102462</a>	09/12/1984	Eddie Williams	Guardianship	NOT PUBLIC	
<a href="#">1984G102463</a>	09/12/1984	Clifton Williams	Guardianship	NOT PUBLIC	

**WebSurrogate Name Search Results Confidential File (NOT PUBLIC)**

## V. File Search

WebSurrogate File Search screen allows users to search for an estate proceeding by entering a file number. File Search can be accessed at any time by selecting “File Search” from the Navigation Menu or the Condensed Menu, and from the Tabbed Search Menu from any search or results page.

The screenshot shows the WebSurrogate interface for the New York State Unified Court System. The main heading is "Search Surrogate's Court Filings" with a note: "For best performance, please use WebSurrogate from a single browser window. Use of multiple sessions may skew results." There are navigation tabs for "Name Search", "File Search", "Old Index Search", "Index Book Pages", and "Will Search". The "File Search" tab is active. Below the tabs, there is a "Court" dropdown menu with the text "Please Select a Court" and a red asterisk indicating it is required. Below that is a "File Number Search" section with the instruction "Must be an exact match to return a result" and a "File #" input field. A red box highlights the "File #" input field. To the right of the input field is a red "Search" button. Three callout boxes with arrows point to these elements: "2. Select Court (REQUIRED)" points to the Court dropdown, "1. Enter File # (REQUIRED)" points to the File # input field, and "3. Click the SEARCH button. (REQUIRED)" points to the Search button.

### WebSurrogate File Search

To complete a **File Search**:

1. **Select Court.**
2. **Enter** file number for proceeding in **File#** field.
3. **Click** the **SEARCH** button.
  - File # entry must exactly match a File Number on record for the Surrogate's Court in order to return a result.
4. The system will display a **File History** page for the file record that matches the File# entered.

NOTE: The system will stay on the File Search page and display a message if an issue is encountered with the search or the results set:

- Submitted search does not meet requirements
- Search returns no results

- If a File Search returns a proceeding that is NOT PUBLIC:
  - File History will not be displayed
  - The system will display a message
  - File Search Page will update with basic file information for matching file record
    - File will be labeled as “NOT PUBLIC”

New York State Unified Court System

WebSurrogate

Home  
Name Search  
File Search  
Old Index Search  
Index Book Pages  
Will Search  
[Terms of Use](#)

**Public Access to the record with this File # is not permitted.**  
Please see court staff if additional information is required.

**Search Surrogate's Court Filings** [HELP](#)  
For best performance, please use WebSurrogate from a single browser window. Use of multiple sessions may skew results.

Name Search **File Search** Old Index Search Index Book Pages Will Search

**Court \***  
Monroe County Surrogate's Court (\*\*Required)

**File Number Search**  
Must be an exact match to return a result:

**File #**  
2009-2115

Search

File #	File Date	File Name	Proceeding	
2009-2115	09/22/2009	Caitlin Elizabeth Hickey	Guardianship	NOT PUBLIC

**WebSurrogate File Search**  
**Confidential File (NOT PUBLIC)**

## A. File History

The WebSurrogate File History page lists all available public information that has been entered for a selected file record. The File History page is displayed after clicking on a File # link from the Name Search Results page or after execution of a successful File # search.

File History includes the following information, **as available**:

- File Details
  - **Surrogate's Court Name**
  - **File #** - file number assigned by court
  - **File Name** – name designated for file
  - **Estate Closed** – indicates whether Estate is open (N) or closed (Y)
  - **File Date** – date proceeding filed
  - **Proceeding** - proceeding description
  - **Disposed** - disposed date
  - **Letters** – type of letters issued
  - **Letters Issued** – date letters issued
  - **Estate Attorney** – attorney name
  - **Estate Attorney Firm** – attorney firm
  - **Judge** – Judge Name
  - **Related Files** – List of associated subfiles, if available, with link to file history
- Party List – information for each party associated with file:
  - **Party (Name)**
    - Last Name, First Name
    - Organization Name
  - **Role** – role of party listed
  - **Date of Death (DOD)** – if available/applicable
  - **Appointed** – date party was appointed to role
- Documents Listing – information for each public document associated with file
  - **Document** - document name
    - Includes link to view document when scanned image is available.
  - **Comments** – comments entered by court
  - **Quantity** – number of documents included in scanned file
  - **Doc Filed (Filed Date)** – date document filed
  - **Signed Date** – date document signed
- **CLOSE** Function to close File History and return to previous page

**WebSurrogate**

Home  
Name Search  
File Search  
Old Index Search  
Index Book Pages  
Will Search

**File History** Close HELP

Monroe County Surrogate's Court  
2019-954 - Carolyn F Qualich

Proceeding: **PROBATE PETITION**  
Letters: **LETTERS TESTAMENTARY**  
Estate Attorney: **Ralph J Code III**  
Estate Attorney Firm: **Boylan Code LLP**

File Date: **04/26/2019**  
Disposed: **05/07/2019**  
Letters Issued: **05/07/2019**  
Judge: **JOHN M OWENS**

**Related Files** (Link provided to view file, if content is available for Public View.)  
[2019-954/A](#)      [2019-954/B](#)      [2019-954/C](#)

Party	Role	DOD	Appointed	Active
Qualich, Amedeo	EXECUTOR		05/07/2019	Y
Qualich, Carolyn F	DECEDENT	01/21/2019		

**Documents** (Link provided to view document, if content is available for Public View.)  
 Click on Document name to view content. Click on column heading to sort by Document name or Doc Filed date.

Document	Comments	QTY	Doc Filed ▲	Signed Date
<a href="#">AFFIDAVIT REGARDING SOLE DISTRIBUTE</a>		1	04/26/2019	
<a href="#">DEATH CERTIFICATE</a>		1	04/26/2019	
<a href="#">NOTICE OF PROBATE WITH AFFIDAVITS OF SERVICE</a>		1	04/26/2019	
<a href="#">PROBATE PETITION</a>		1	04/26/2019	
<a href="#">REQUEST FOR SURROGATE COURT ACTION</a>		1	04/26/2019	
<a href="#">WILL OF TESTATOR ORIGINAL W/ AFFIDAVIT OF ATTESTING WITNESSES</a>		1	04/26/2019	06/20/2016
<a href="#">DECREE GRANTING PROBATE</a>	COURT EFILED-2019-05-07	1	05/07/2019	05/07/2019
<a href="#">INVENTORY</a>		1	01/14/2020	
<a href="#">REQUEST FOR SURROGATE COURT ACTION</a>		1	01/14/2020	

**Annotations:**

- Click File# link to view File History
- Click Document link to view contents
- No link means document content is not available for public view
- Click CLOSE to return to previous page

**WebSurrogate File History**

**NOTE:** When accessed over the Internet, WebSurrogate ONLY provides links to document images that were filed on or after 02/19/2014. Links to view images of documents records filed prior to 02/19/2014 are not provided within WebSurrogate over the Internet.

**Images of documents filed prior to 02/19/2014 may be viewed using the public access computers at court locations.**



## VI. Old Index Search

The WebSurrogate Old Index Search screen allows users to search stored images of historical Surrogate's Court records by file (decedent) name or file number. Old Index Search can be accessed at any time by selecting "Old Index Search" from the Navigation Menu or the Condensed Menu, and from the Tabbed Search Menu from any search or results page.

**NOTE:** In order to have searchable Old Index records, Surrogate's Courts need to scan the Old Index paper files to create images, upload the image files, and/or manually enter Old Index information into the case management system.

### **Not all Surrogate's Courts have scanned/entered Old Index Records.**

**WebSurrogate will display a message if Old Image records are not available online for public view at a court.**

**NOTE:** When accessed over the Internet, WebSurrogate ONLY provides links to document images that were filed on or after 02/19/2014. Links to view images of Old Index records are not provided within WebSurrogate over the Internet.

**Images of Old Index records may be viewed using the public access computers at court locations.**

The screenshot shows the 'New York State Unified Court System' WebSurrogate interface. The 'Old Index Search' tab is selected. The page contains a search form with the following elements:

- 1. Select Court (REQUIRED):** A dropdown menu labeled 'Court \*' with the text 'Please Select a Court' and a red asterisk indicating it is required.
- 2. Enter Last Name OR File Number (REQUIRED):** Two input fields: 'Last Name' and 'File #'. The 'File #' field has a note: 'Entry must be an exact match to return a result.'
- 3. If Last Name entered: Enter First Name (Optional):** An input field labeled 'First Name (Optional)'.
- 4. Click associated SEARCH button. (REQUIRED):** Two red 'Search' buttons, one for the Name Search section and one for the File Number Search section.

**WebSurrogate Old Index Search Screen**

To complete an **Old Index Search**:

**1. Select Court.**

- If the selected court does not have Old Index records available online for public view, WebSurrogate will display a message in place of search fields and buttons.

The screenshot shows the 'Search Surrogate's Court Filings' page. At the top, it says 'For best performance, please use WebSurrogate from a single browser window. Use of multiple sessions may skew results.' Below this are five search tabs: 'Name Search', 'File Search', 'Old Index Search', 'Index Book Pages', and 'Will Search'. The 'Old Index Search' tab is selected. Below the tabs, there is a note: 'An Old Index Search is used to search stored images of historical Surrogate's Court Records. NOTE: Not all Surrogate's Courts have Old Indexes available online for public view.' A 'Court' dropdown menu is set to 'Orleans County Surrogate's Court' with a red asterisk and '(Required)' next to it. Below the dropdown, a red message states: 'This court does not have Old Indexes available online.'

**WebSurrogate No Old Index Records**

- Search fields and buttons will remain on the screen to complete an Old Index Search if the selected Surrogate's Court has Old Index records available online.
- 2. Enter File Name OR File Number.**
- **Last Name** required for File Name Search
    - Entry of two (2) characters is required to perform search
    - If 2-3 characters are entered, results will include exact matches ONLY
    - Entry of at least four (4) characters are required to perform an initial character (fuzzy) search
  - **File#** required for File Number Search
    - File # entry must exactly match a File Number on record for the Surrogate's Court in order to return a result
- 3. Enter Optional First Name information** associated with Last Name entry:
- First Name – no minimum characters
- 4. Click associated **SEARCH** button.**
- The system will display **Old Index Search Results Page** with a listing of matching Old Index records that match:
    - Name entry
    - File Number entry.

NOTE: The system will stay on the Old Index Search page and display a message if an issue is encountered with the search or the results set:

- Submitted search does not meet requirements
- Search returns no results or finds too many matches (Results > 1000)

### A. Old Index Search Results

The WebSurrogate Old Index Search Results page lists all Old Image records that match the parameters entered on the Old Index Search page. The search results page includes:

- **Old Index Search parameters** with values for current search:
  - **Court** name
  - **Name** or **File Number** information
    - Last Name, First Name, OR
    - File #
  - Functions to **MODIFY SEARCH** or start **NEW SEARCH**
- The **Results List** containing Old Index records that match current Old Index Search parameters:
  - Information included in results list for each matching Old Index record, **as available**:
    - **Image** – link to image, if available
    - **File #** - File number assigned by Surrogate's Court
    - **File Name** – name of record assigned to proceeding (decedent for estates)
    - **Proceeding** – name of the type of proceeding
    - **Date of Death (DoD)** – Death Date on record for proceeding
    - **Will Date** – Will Date on record for proceeding
    - **Details** – link to open a Details page which displays if additional information is available
  - The Results List is sorted alphabetically by File Name (Last Name then First Name) and then by File Number (numeric)
    - Click on the column heading to sort the results list by:
      - File#
      - File Name

The screenshot shows the 'New York State Unified Court System' WebSurrogate interface. The main heading is 'Search Surrogate's Court Filings'. Below this, there are search filters for 'Name Search', 'File Search', 'Old Index Search', 'Index Book Pages', and 'Will Search'. The search results are for 'Monroe County Surrogate's Court' with the last name 'Clark'. A table lists 20 records with columns for File #, File Name, Proceeding, DOD, Will Date, and Details. Callouts point to the 'File #' and 'File Name' headings, an 'Image' link in the first column, and a 'Details' link in the last column.

**Click heading to sort by: File# File Name**

**Click IMAGE link to open image with**

**Click DETAILS link to view additional information on Details page**

	File #	File Name ▲	Proceeding	DOD	Will Date	Details
Image	1947-1754	A FIDDIS CLARK	WILL			Details
Image	1945-290	ADA (AKA) ADA POTTER CLARK	ADM			Details
Image	1960-1529	ADA V CLARK	WILL			Details
Image	1944-213	ADELE HATHAWAY CLARK	WILL			Details
Image	1966-1872	AGNES H CLARK	WILL			Details
Image	1979-1-EE	ALAN P CLARK	SSD			Details
Image	1979-2198	ALAN P CLARK	ADM			Details
Image	1966-677	ALBERT E CLARK	WIL			Details
Image	1977-100	ALDEN I CLARK	WIL			Details
Image	1927-1553	ALDEN IRVING CLARK	GDN			Details
Image	1919-183	ALFRED G CLARK	ADM			Details
Image	1864-282	ALFRED M CLARK	GDN			Details
Image	1981-3151	ALFREDA I CLARK	WIL			Details
Image	1910-138	ALICE CLARK	ADM			Details
Image	1956-5434	ALICE CLARK	TT			Details
Image	1960-1-F	ALICE CLARK	SSD			Details
Image	1964-2114	ALICE D CLARK	WILL			Details
Image	1968-2708	ALICE M CLARK	WILL			Details
Image	1937-199	ALONZO WARD CLARK	WILL			Details
Image	1875-45	ALPHENS S CLARK				Details

Results 1 - 20 of 958

First 1 2 3 4 5 > Last

**WebSurrogate Old Index Search Results Screen**

## B. Old Index Details

The WebSurrogate Old Index Details page lists all available information that has been entered for a selected Old Image file. The Old Index Details page is accessed from the Old Index Search results listing. Old Index Details includes the following information, **if available**:

- **File #** - File number assigned by Surrogate's Court
- **Proceeding** – name of the type of proceeding
- **Last Name** – last name of primary party assigned as file name (decedent, if estate)
- **First Name** – first name of primary party assigned as file name (decedent, if estate)
- Date of Death (**DoD**) – Death Date on record for proceeding
- **Will Date** – Will Date on record for proceeding
- **Residence** – decedent's place of residence
- **Liberbook** – Liber number of book where Old Index is recorded
- **Liberpage** – page number in Liber book where Old Index is recorded
- **Image Year** – the year the Old Index was recorded
- **Comments** – comments entered by Surrogate's Court about record
- **CLOSE** Function to close Old Index Details and return to results page



**WebSurrogate Old Index Details Screen**

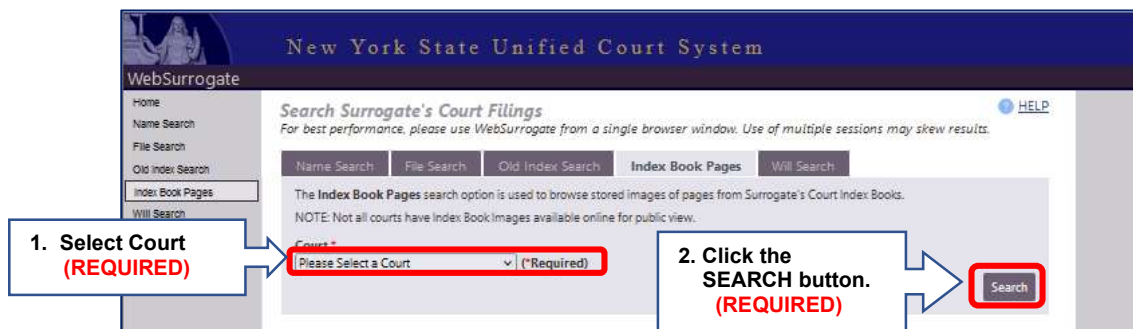
## VII. Index Book Pages

WebSurrogate Index Book Pages feature allows the public to browse stored images of (Decedent) Index Book Pages that have been scanned and uploaded for public view. Index Book Pages can be accessed at any time by selecting “Index Book Pages” from the Navigation Menu or the Condensed Menu, and from the Tabbed Search Menu from any search or results page.

**NOTE:** In order to browse Index Book Pages, Surrogate’s Courts need to scan the Index Books to create image files, upload the image files, and/or manually enter Index Book Page image information into the case management system.

**Not all Surrogate’s Courts have scanned Index Book Pages.**

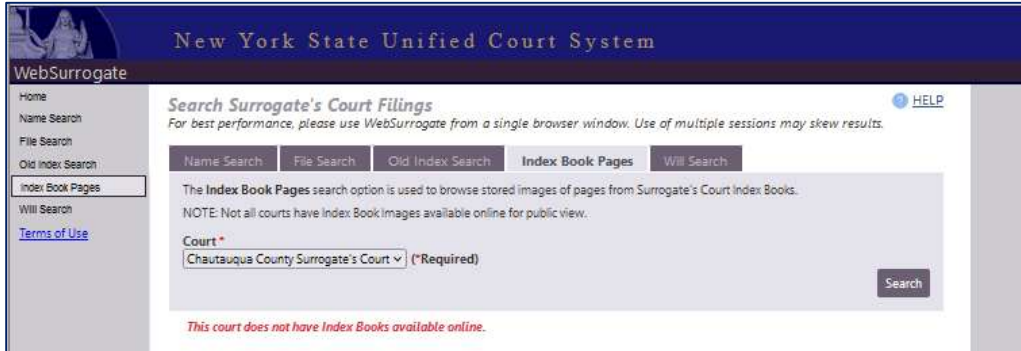
**WebSurrogate will display a message if Index Book Pages are not available online for public view.**



**WebSurrogate Index Book Pages**

To view **Index Book Pages**:

1. **Select Court.**
2. Click the **SEARCH** button.
  - If the selected court does not have Index Book Page images available for public view, WebSurrogate will display a message indicating that Index Book Pages are not available online for public view.



### WebSurrogate No Index Book Page Images

If the selected court has Index Book Page images available for public view, The WebSurrogate Index Book Pages screen will display a listing (Results List) with all Index Book Page images for that Surrogate's Court.

After a successful search, the Index Book Pages screen will include:

- **Court Selection**
- **Search Button**
- **Results List** containing all Index Book Page images for the Surrogate's Court.
  - Information included in results list for each image, **if available**:
    - **Starting Year** – the year the Index Book starts
      - Includes link to open image, if available
    - **Ending Year** – the year the Index Book ends
    - **Index Book Type** – used to identify book type if the Surrogate's Court keeps different Index Books for distinct purposes
    - **Starting Letter** – the starting letter(s) of the initial name entry on the Index Book Page contained in the image

- The Results List is sorted by Starting Year (chronological) and then by Ending Year (chronological)
  - Index Books with the same Starting Year and Ending Year are sorted alphabetically by Index Book Type and then by Starting Letter.
  - Click on the column heading to sort the results list by:
    - Starting Year

The screenshot shows the 'Search Surrogate's Court Filings' page. The 'Index Book Pages' search option is selected. The search results table is sorted by Starting Year. Two callout boxes provide instructions: 'Click heading to sort by: Starting Year' pointing to the 'Starting Year' column header, and 'Click Starting Year link to view image' pointing to a blue link in the 'Starting Year' column of the first row.

Starting Year ▲	Ending Year	Index Book Type	Starting Letter
<a href="#">1780</a>	1895	Wills	A
<a href="#">1780</a>	1895	Wills	B
<a href="#">1780</a>	1895	Wills	C
<a href="#">1780</a>	1895	Wills	D
<a href="#">1780</a>	1895	Wills	E
<a href="#">1780</a>	1895	Wills	F
<a href="#">1780</a>	1895	Wills	G
<a href="#">1780</a>	1895	Wills	H
<a href="#">1780</a>	1895	Wills	I
<a href="#">1780</a>	1895	Wills	J
<a href="#">1780</a>	1895	Wills	K
<a href="#">1780</a>	1895	Wills	L
<a href="#">1780</a>	1895	Wills	M
<a href="#">1780</a>	1895	Wills	N
<a href="#">1780</a>	1895	Wills	O
<a href="#">1780</a>	1895	Wills	P
<a href="#">1780</a>	1895	Wills	Q
<a href="#">1780</a>	1895	Wills	R
<a href="#">1780</a>	1895	Wills	S
<a href="#">1780</a>	1895	Wills	T

**WebSurrogate Index Book Pages Results**



## VIII. Will Search

The WebSurrogate Will Search screen allows users to search Wills Filed For Safekeeping at a Surrogate's Court by Testator name. Will Search can be accessed at any time by selecting "Will Search" from the Navigation Menu or the Condensed Menu, and from the Tabbed Search Menu from any search or results page.

**NOTE:** Wills held in Safekeeping are filed with a Surrogate's court prior to probate. They are not part of the public record and are not available for public view. Only Will record information will be displayed.

**Not all Surrogate's Courts have Will records available for public search.**

**WebSurrogate will display a message if Will records are not available online.**

The screenshot shows the 'WebSurrogate' interface for the 'New York State Unified Court System'. The main heading is 'Search Surrogate's Court Filings'. Below this, there are tabs for 'Name Search', 'File Search', 'Old Index Search', 'Index Book Pages', and 'Will Search'. The 'Will Search' tab is selected. The page contains the following text and form elements:

- Will Search is used to determine if a Surrogate's Court has a Will Filed For Safekeeping.** Wills held in Safekeeping are filed with a Surrogate's court prior to probate. They are not part of the public record and are not available for public view.
- A Will search will return a list of **Wills filed for Safekeeping** with matching name information, address (if available), and a Will Number.
- If a Date of Death (DOD) value is listed below, please use a Name Search or File Search to find the file record (proceeding) with Will document.**
- NOTE: Not all Surrogate's Courts have Will Records available online for public view.
- Court \*** (Required): A dropdown menu with the text 'Please Select a Court'.
- Will Name Search**: Will Name Search requires entry of a Last Name (2 characters minimum) and a First Name (Optional) (2 characters minimum). (Fuzzy) search. If 2 characters are entered, Last Name must be an exact match to list the record in the results list.
- Last Name**: A text input field.
- First Name (Optional)**: A text input field.
- Search**: A red button.

Four numbered callouts with arrows point to specific elements on the screen:

- 1. Select Court (REQUIRED)**: Points to the 'Court' dropdown menu.
- 2. Enter Last Name (REQUIRED)**: Points to the 'Last Name' text input field.
- 3. If Last Name entered: Enter First Name (Optional)**: Points to the 'First Name (Optional)' text input field.
- 4. Click SEARCH button. (REQUIRED)**: Points to the 'Search' button.

**WebSurrogate Will Search Screen**

To complete a **Will Search**:

**1. Select Court.**

- If the selected court does not have Will records available online for public search, WebSurrogate will display a message in place of search fields and buttons.

**WebSurrogate No Will Records**

- If the selected court has Will Records available, the search fields and button will remain on the screen to continue the Will Search.
- 2. Enter Testator Last Name (Required for Will Search).**
- Entry of two (2) characters is required to perform search
  - If 2-3 characters are entered, results will include exact matches ONLY
  - Entry of at least four (4) characters are required to perform an initial character (fuzzy) search
- 3. Enter Optional First Name information** associated with Last Name entry.
- First Name – no minimum characters
- 4. Click associated **SEARCH** button.**
- If the selected court has Will records available for public search, the WebSurrogate Will Search screen will update to include a listing (Results List) with all matching Will records for that Surrogate's Court.
- NOTE: The system will display a message if an issue is encountered with the search or the results set:
- Submitted search does not meet requirements
  - Search returns no results or finds too many matches (Results > 1000)

After a successful search, the Will Search screen will include:

- **Court Selection**
- **Last Name and First Name fields, with entry**
- **Search Button**
- **Results List** containing all matching Will records for the Surrogate's Court.
  - Information included in results list for each Will Record, **if available**:
    - **Full Name** – Testator name for Will record
    - **AKA** – Y indicates name is an alias; N indicates primary name for Testator
    - **Address** – street, city, state and zip code
    - **Will#** – Will Number assigned by the court that is used to locate the Will record.
    - **DOD** – Date of Death is included if the person has died and is associated with a proceeding.
      - Please use Name Search and File Search to search for file records.
  - The Results List is sorted alphabetically by Full Name
    - Click on the column heading to sort the results list by Full Name.

**New York State Unified Court System**  
WebSurrogate

**Search Surrogate's Court Filings**  
For best performance, please use WebSurrogate from a single browser window. Use of multiple sessions may skew results.

Will Search is used to determine if a Surrogate's Court has a Will Filed For Safekeeping. Wills held in Safekeeping are filed with a Surrogate's court prior to probate. They are not part of the public record and are not available for public view. A Will search will return a list of Wills filed for Safekeeping with matching name information, address (if available), and a Will Number. If a Date of Death (DOD) value is listed below, please use a Name Search or File Search to find the file record (proceeding) with Will document.

NOTE: Not all Surrogate's Courts have Will Records available online for public view.

Court \*  
Monroe County Surrogate's Court (\*Required)

**Will Name Search**  
Will Name Search requires entry of a Last Name (2 character minimum). Four (4) or more characters are required for initial character (fuzzy) search. If 2 characters are entered, Last Name must be an exact match to list the Will record in the results list.

Last Name: peterson  
First Name (Optional):  
Search

Full Name ▲	AKA	Address	Will #	DOD
Peterson, Carolyn	N	NY	5640	
Peterson, Grover G	N	340 Windsor Rd Rochester NY	5641	
Peterson, Joseph	N	NY	5643	
Peterson, John Richard	N	East Rochester NY	10898	
Peterson, Kenneth R	N	NY	5644	
Peterson, Margaret M	N	201 Forgham Rd Greece NY	10899	
Peterson, Mary E	N	NY	12588	
Peterson, Miles	N	242 Circle Drive Holley NY 14470	17159	10/25/2020
Peterson, Miles D	Y	242 Circle Drive Holley NY 14470	17159	10/25/2020
Peterson, Miles Davis	Y	242 Circle Drive Holley NY 14470	17159	10/25/2020
Peterson, Patricia J	N	133 1/2 West Filbert St East Rochester NY 14445	5646	
Peterson, Sam J	N	133 1/2 West Filbert St East Rochester NY 14445	5647	

Results 1 - 12 of 12

### WebSurrogate Will Search Results

## IX. WebSurrogate FAQ

### **I liked the old Public Search tool better.**

#### *Why did Public Search change for Surrogate's Courts records?*

Several factors compelled the development of WebSurrogate to replace the UCMS Surrogate's Public Access module.

The goal of WebSurrogate is to provide a web-based search tool that:

- Allows examination of public records from Surrogate's Court proceedings
- Precludes access to court networks and/or resources
- Supports statewide search of Surrogate's Court records with proper credentials
  - Allow tool to be used remotely without the need to travel to courts (future)
- Aligns with Section 207.64 of the Uniform Rules for the Surrogate's Court to protect personal information.

### **I could find/view more file records with the old search tool.**

#### *Why can't I search file records by Judge, Proceeding, or File Date?*

#### *Why do I have to enter a complete File # in File Search?*

#### *Why does File Search only allow view of a single record?*

#### *Why do I have to enter so many characters for Name Search?*

#### *Why are results limited to 1,000 records?*

To protect personal information in accordance with Section 207.64 of the Uniform Rules for the Surrogate's Court, WebSurrogate was designed to prevent open searches, previously allowed in the UCMS Surrogate's Public Access search module. Some search parameters were dropped because they supported "fishing expeditions" returning huge results sets without proper filters to limit views and/or access to information.

The primary use case for WebSurrogate public search functions assumes the user knows the name and date of death or the file number for a proceeding. Name searches allow fuzzy searches and will yield a larger result set. However, a results list of over 1,000 records compromises performance, making view, sort, and navigation slow and cumbersome.

### **I can't view some file records from the search results list.**

#### *Why are some files listed as NOT PUBLIC?*

#### *Why do some file records not have links to view details and documents?*

Public Access is restricted to certain filings (and documents) per Section 207.64 of the Uniform Rules for the Surrogate's Court. This order seeks to protect confidential personal information included within Surrogate's Court records. In accordance with this order, WebSurrogate provides an index of files that match search parameters, but does not provide links for Guardianship files, thereby preventing public access to file details and/or documents. Surrogate's Court files marked confidential are treated the same.

## **I can't view some documents from File History**

### ***Why do some documents not have links to view?***

There are three reasons why some documents are listed with no link provided to view the document:

- There is no associated image/file with document contents in the Surrogate's Court case management system.
- Public Access to the document is restricted.
- Document filed date predates Section 207.64 of the Uniform Rules for Surrogate's Courts

On February 19, 2014, the Uniform Rules for Surrogate's Courts were amended to include Section 207.64 to protect Confidential Personal Information (CPI) and restrict access to certain file records and documents.

Public Access is restricted to certain documents (and filings) per Section 207.64 of the Uniform Rules for the Surrogate's Court. This order seeks to protect confidential personal information included within Surrogate's Court records. In accordance with this order, WebSurrogate provides an index of file documents but does not provide links for restricted documents and/or documents that may contain confidential personal information, thereby preventing public access to document contents.

When accessed over the Internet, WebSurrogate ONLY provides links to document images that were filed on or after 02/19/2014. Unrestricted documents filed at a Surrogate's Court prior to 02/19/2014 may be viewed using the public access computers inside that court.

## **I can't view Wills**

### ***Why aren't there any links to view Wills under Will Search?***

Will Search lists records for Wills Filed For Safekeeping with a Surrogate's Court prior to a Testator's death. This allows interested parties to determine if there is a Will on file with a Surrogate's Court after a person dies. Wills Filed For Safekeeping are not public records, and are, therefore, not available for public view in WebSurrogate.

When a Testator dies, a Will Filed For Safekeeping will be associated with the Surrogate's Court Filing and the Will record will be updated with a Date of Death.

If a Date of Death is listed on a matching record after performing a Will Search, this indicates that there is a file record containing the Will document for a decedent. Name Search and File Search may be used to find a file record in WebSurrogate and to view the Will document after a person's death.