FINRA Regulation Filing Application

Batch Submissions

Contents

Last Updated On: 24-Oct-13

Description

Transmitting files via file transfer protocol (FTP) Batch Submission enables FINRA member firms to submit a large volume of filings directly to a secure server and to automate and streamline the submission process.

Firms with a high volume of filings may find that batch submission is more efficient than manually submitting individual pieces to FINRA using the Regulation Filing Application (RFA) web site.

Steps for firms new to batch submission

You will need to complete the steps below to start using Batch Submission:

1. Read this document thoroughly.
2. Have a preliminary conversation with the FINRA RFA Support Team. They can be contacted via email at RFA Support.
3. Acquire all necessary FINRA accounts and verify connectivity to FINRA;
4. Select an FTP mechanism or FTP client software;
5. Upload several test files to FINRA's Customer Test Environment (CTE) and work out any issues with formatting and the upload process;
6. Acquire verification from FINRA that the test files were received properly;
7. Begin uploading actual filings to FINRA's production servers.

This document provides the information necessary to complete each of the required steps.

Acquiring necessary FINRA accounts

To submit batch filings, you need:

- FTP access to FINRA
- FTP accounts on FINRA's FTP servers
  - one account on the Customer Test Environment (CTE)
  - one account on the Production Environment

FTP Access to FINRA

You will need to determine whether your firm has already established FTP access to FINRA's servers in order to submit other regulatory information. Your firm's Super Account Administrator (SAA) can provide this information. Super Account Administrators are individuals at your firm who are authorized to create and manage FINRA accounts. Questions regarding SAA's or firm access to the system can be directed by phone to the FINRA Call Center at (800) 321-6273, Option 3..

FINRA supports both HTTPS (port 443) and SFTP (port 22). HTTPS port is generally open. If the customer prefers SFTP, FINRA must open a port on its firewall, tied to a specific source IP address on the firm's side. If you would like to use the SFTP option please contact FINRA FTP support team at RFA Support.

FTP Account on FINRA's Servers

Beyond the ability to connect and transmit via FTP to FINRA (described above), you will also need FTP credentials. These credentials are just for the FTP server and are completely different from the normal FINRA Enterprise Web Security (EWS) credentials that are used for access to most of FINRA's web-based applications.

FTP credentials must be requested by one of your firm's SAAs.
- If you cannot identify your SAA, please call, and select Option 1 for entitlements questions. The operator can help you more easily if you know your firm's CRD number.

SAA's must request FTP accounts in both the Customer Test Environment and Production Environments
- For an FTP account on the **Customer Test Environment** server, please e-mail your request to RFA Support
- For an FTP account on the **Production** server, please read this page and follow the instructions under "Entitlement Information for File Transfer Applications FTP Users"

A Note about FTP Accounts
Accounts on the Production and CTE FTP servers are not synchronized. Even if you create an account with the same username on both servers, the passwords can be different and changes to one will not cascade to the other.

Test environment submission and review process

These instructions refer explicitly to FINRA's **Customer Test Environment** (CTE), which is a sandbox offered to firms who are developing automated interfaces to FINRA's systems, and populates only QC databases on FINRA's side. It does not populate actual production systems.

This CTE interface should be used by firms to test the batch submission process (with help from FINRA), before using the production system.

Submissions or other actions in the CTE will have no effect on actual filings by your firm within the production system.

The CTE is not covered by an SLA, and is therefore not guaranteed to be up at all times, particularly on weekends.

Submitting the file to the CTE environment
- Log into FTP
    - filetransfer.**qa.**finra**.**org (198.202.241.37)
    - Authenticate with a valid FTP account

    Note: the FTP servers will lock out an account after 3 consecutive failed attempts to connect, so verify your username and password carefully if you experience an error. If you get locked-out please call the FINRA Call Center at (800) 321-6273, Option 3.

- The diagram below illustrates FINRA's batch submission folder structure. There are two child folders:

- one is used to deposit files ("in")
- a different folder is used to retrieve FINRA submission reports ("out").
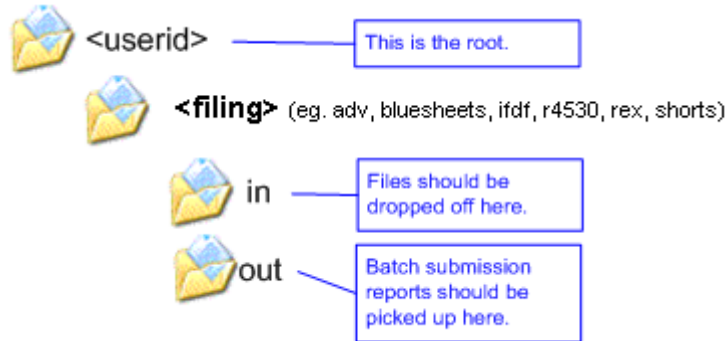
- Use the "put" command to put the batch XML file in your FTP account directory. (Example: `Put xxxxx.xxx` where `xxxxx.xxx` is the file on your computer to be sent to FINRA.)
- Use the "get" command to get your output reports (Example: Get RPT_xxxxx.xml or Get RPT_xxxxx.1)
- To retrieve the output file after the file transfer is complete:

  - Report files are placed back into your FTP directory for certain types of filings.
  - As a matter of general practice, the output file should be available in the "out" folder within **one hour** from the time the FTP connection is closed, **not when the upload is complete**.
  - FINRA recommends that firms' scripts include an explicit logout after all files have been uploaded.

  Note: the output files are retrieved from the "out" folder, not the "in" folder where the files are dropped off.

Production submission and review process

The following instructions refer explicitly to submitting files to FINRA's production environment.

Submissions in the Production environment will be treated as official filings by your firm.

Submitting the file to the production environment

FINRA's production environment mirrors the customer test environment. Once you have completed all test processes and are ready to use the production system, the instructions that precede this section remain the same, except for the following environment- specific variables:

- FTP server details over the internet **filetransfer.finra.org (75.98.61.45)**
- Production FTP accounts must be acquired, if you do not already have them.

Getting help

For technical assistance, please contact the FINRA Call Center at (800) 321-6273,Option 3, and specify that your issues are with the "**Batch Submission feature for the Regulatory Filings Application (RFA).**" The call center will route your query to the Technology group that supports batch submission.