

Secure File Transfer Protocol (SFTP) Interface for Data Intake User Guide

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Description

Transmitting files via secure file transfer protocol (SFTP) 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 entries to FINRA using the online filing application.

Steps for firms new to batch submission

You will need to complete the steps below to start using Batch Submission; as necessary, more details on the individual steps are provided in the following sections.

1. Read this document thoroughly;
2. Have a preliminary conversation with the FINRA Data Intake Support Team if you have any questions. They can be contacted via email at DLDataIntakeSupport@finra.org;
3. Acquire all necessary FINRA accounts and verify connectivity to FINRA;
4. Select an SFTP mechanism or SFTP 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:

- SFTP access to FINRA
- SFTP accounts on FINRA's SFTP servers
 - The same account can be used in the Customer Test Environment (CTE) and Production Environment

SFTP Access to FINRA

You will need to determine whether or not your firm already has established SFTP access to FINRA's servers – for example, 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 SAAs or firm access to the system can be directed by phone to the FINRA Call Center at (800) 321-6273, Option 3.



FINRA supports

- HTTPS (port 443) via a web UI accessible on web browsers and
- SFTP (port 22).

The HTTPS port is generally open and does not require firewall work. 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 SFTP support team at DLDataIntakeSupport@finra.org.

SFTP Account on FINRA's Servers

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

SFTP credentials must be requested by one of your firm's SAAs.

- If you cannot identify your SAA, please contact the FINRA Call Center at (800) 321-6273, and select Option 1 for entitlements questions. The operator can help you more easily if you know your firm's CRD number.

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.

Submitting the file to the CTE environment using the Secure File Transfer Gateway Upload User Interface (HTTPS)

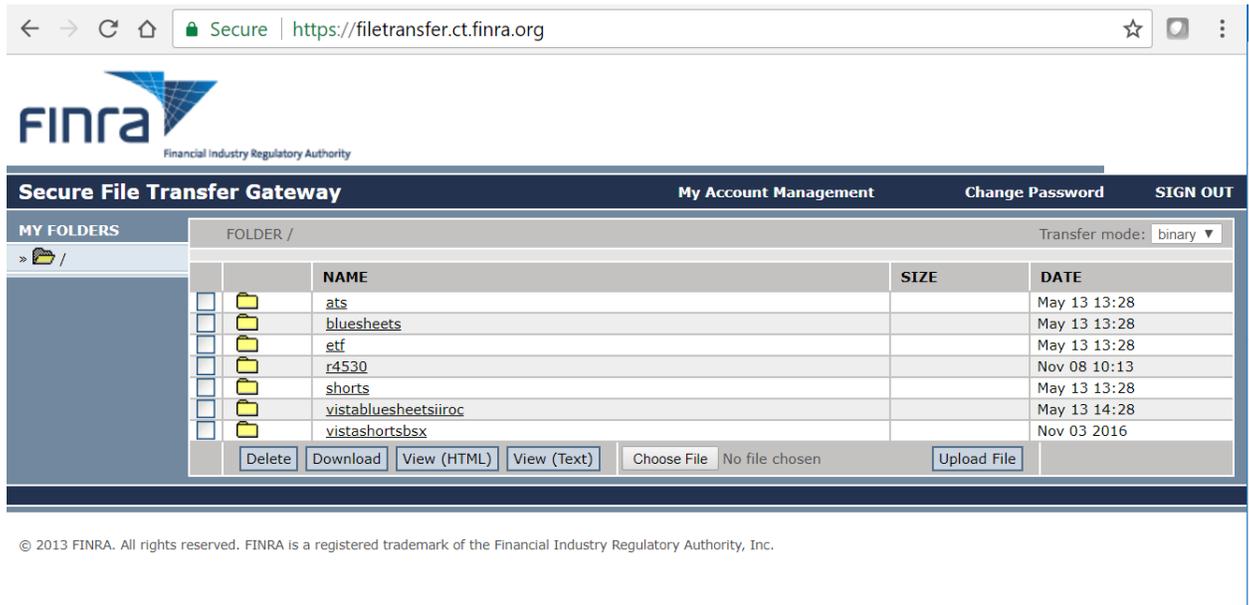
Please pay careful attention to the environment you are connected to so you do not accidentally upload testing data to production. The same credentials work in both Customer Test (CT) and production. The only difference between the testing and production environment is the URL.

Uploading a Submission via Secure File Transfer Gateway Upload User Interface

- Using your browser, log into Customer Test SFTP
 - <https://filetransfer.ct.finra.org>
 - Authenticate with a valid SFTP account

Note: the SFTP 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.

- When you login, you will see directories for each of the filing types for which you have permissions. *In the screengrab below, the user has permission to submit seven different filing types.*



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://filetransfer.ct.finra.org>. The page displays the FINRA logo and a navigation bar with links for "My Account Management", "Change Password", and "SIGN OUT". Below the navigation bar, there is a section titled "MY FOLDERS" with a "FOLDER /" header. A table lists several folders with columns for "NAME", "SIZE", and "DATE". At the bottom of the table, there are buttons for "Delete", "Download", "View (HTML)", "View (Text)", "Choose File", and "Upload File".

	NAME	SIZE	DATE
<input type="checkbox"/>	ats		May 13 13:28
<input type="checkbox"/>	bluesheets		May 13 13:28
<input type="checkbox"/>	etf		May 13 13:28
<input type="checkbox"/>	r4530		Nov 08 10:13
<input type="checkbox"/>	shorts		May 13 13:28
<input type="checkbox"/>	vistabluesheetsiiroc		May 13 14:28
<input type="checkbox"/>	vistashortsbx		Nov 03 2016

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- Within each filing type, there are two child folders:
 - The "in" folder is where you will drop your submitted files off for FINRA to ingest and process.

- The “out” folder is where you will find submissions reports/results file that are generated by the FINRA ingest process.

This shows the filing directory. In this case, it is the 4530 filing.

Navigate to the “in” folder to upload your submission file.

Report files are published to the “out” folder.

- Navigate to the “In” folder for the filing you want to submit. In the screenshot below, we have navigated to the “in” folder for the 4530 filing. **Upload files to the “in” directory only.**

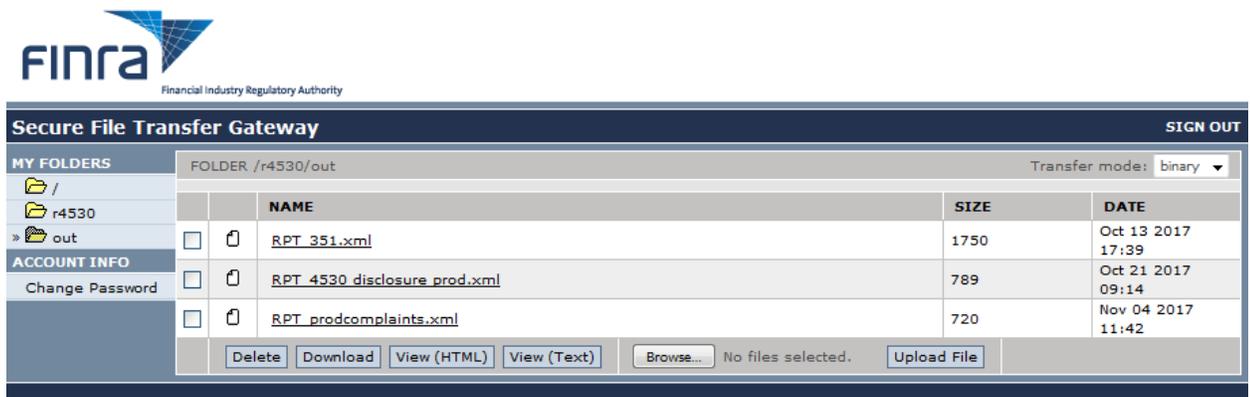
Only upload files to the “in” directory. The open folder icon and the “>” indicate the the user is in the “in” directory.

- Click the “Choose File” button to select the file you want to upload.
- Click the “Upload File” button to upload the selected file.

- The file will disappear from the “in” folder when it is picked up for processing. Files are processed in the order in which they are received.
- Logout of the Secure File Transfer Gateway.

Retrieving the Report File(s)

- The system will return a report file noting any validation errors that occurred during processing. To retrieve the output file after the file transfer is complete:
 - Log into the Secure File Transfer Gateway.
 - Navigate to the folder for the filing type, and then to the “out” folder. *Note: the output files are retrieved from the “out” folder, not the “in” folder where the files are dropped off.*
 - Report/results files have the same name as the file you originally uploaded with the prefix “RPT_”. The screenshot below shows three report files for three different 4530 file submissions. **If you use the same file name each time you submit, your previous report file will be overwritten each time a new report file is created.**
 - Depending on the filing type, you may have more than one report file. If that is the case, the different report files will have the suffix “.1” (for File Validation Report) or “.2” (for Record Validation Report).



The screenshot shows the FINRA Secure File Transfer Gateway interface. The main area displays a list of files in the 'out' folder. The files are:

NAME	SIZE	DATE
RPT_351.xml	1750	Oct 13 2017 17:39
RPT_4530_disclosure_prod.xml	789	Oct 21 2017 09:14
RPT_prodcomplaints.xml	720	Nov 04 2017 11:42

At the bottom of the interface, there are buttons for 'Delete', 'Download', 'View (HTML)', 'View (Text)', 'Browse...', 'Upload File', and 'No files selected.'.

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- To view the report file, you can double click the file name. Or, you can select the checkbox next to the file name and click the Download, View (HTML), or View (Text) buttons.
- To delete a report file, check the box next to the file you want to delete and then click the “Delete” button.
- As a matter of general practice, the report file should be available in the “out” folder within **one hour** from the time the SFTP connection is closed, **not when the upload is complete.**
- After retrieving your report file, logout.

Submitting the file to the CTE environment via SFTP

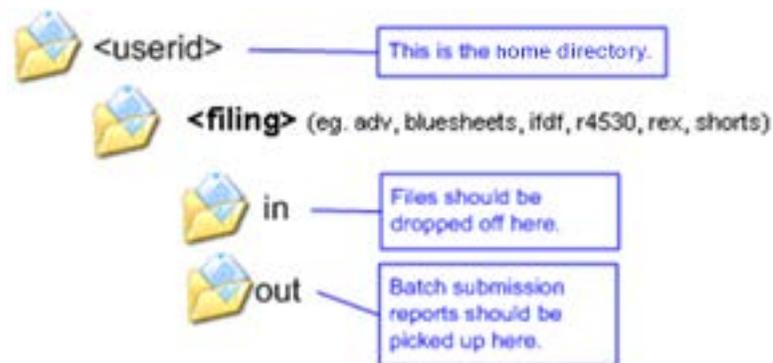
Please pay careful attention to the environment you are connected to so you do not accidentally upload testing data to production. The same credentials work in both CT and production. The only difference between the testing and production environment is the URL.

Uploading a Submission via SFTP

- Using an SFTP client, log into SFTP
 - filetransfer.ct.finra.org (198.202.241.37)
 - Authenticate with a valid SFTP account

Note: the SFTP 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:
 - The "in" folder is where you will drop your submitted files off for FINRA to ingest and process.
 - The "out" folder is where you will find submissions reports/results file that are generated by the FINRA ingest process.



- Use the "put" command to upload the batch XML file to your SFTP account directory on FINRA's servers. (Example: *PUT xxxxx.xxx* where xxxxx.xxx is the file on your computer to be sent to FINRA.)

Retrieving the Report File(s)

- Report/results files are placed back into your SFTP directory for certain types of filings. To retrieve the report output file after the file transfer is complete:

- Use the “get” command to get your output reports (Example: *GET RPT_XXXXX.xml* or *GET RPT_XXXXX.1*). The report file will have the same name as the file you submitted with the prefix “RPT_” prepended.
- Depending on the filing type, you may have more than one report file. If that is the case, the different report files will have the suffix “.1” (for File Validation Report) or “.2” (for Record Validation Report).
- As a matter of general practice, the report file should be available in the “out” folder within **one hour** from the time the SFTP connection is closed, **not when the upload is complete**.
- FINRA recommends that firms’ scripts include an explicit logout after all files have been uploaded.

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

Please pay careful attention to the environment you are connected to so you do not accidentally upload testing data to production. The same credentials work in both CT and production. The only difference between the testing and production environment is the URL.

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:

- HTTPS server URL: <https://filetransfer.finra.org>
- SFTP server hostname/IP address: **filetransfer.finra.org (75.98.61.45)**

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 Data Intake.**” The call center will route your query to the Technology group that supports batch submission. Or, you can email DLDataIntakeSupport@finra.org.