

Comments by Presiding Judge Colin Campbell on Electronic Filing

Two years ago, the Superior Court and Clerk of Court began a pilot project on electronic filing in the complex civil court. Under the pilot project, all filings into court and orders of the court are done electronically. There are no paper filings into the Court. With electronic filing, the delay associated with paper filings is eliminated. Paper files do not need to be found and brought to various places. Everything is available instantly on a desktop computer. Judge Fields, a civil complex court judge, is one of the judges on this project.

Today, I am releasing administrative orders that will move the Superior Court and Justice Courts to electronic filing in all departments by 2008. This will begin the biggest technological change in how the Superior Court and the Clerk of the Court conducts its business in its history. It will result in easier public access to the Court and quicker disposition of cases, and will save millions of dollars in taxpayer revenues.

We will phase in this process slowly and deliberately. Judge Peter Swann will be the pilot division for civil. On June 20, a small group of cases selected by Judge Swann will be brought onto electronic filing. Over time, all files in his division will be shifted to electronic filing. From there, expansion in the whole civil department will occur. Each department will begin phase-in at a different time, and each will proceed in the same fashion.

Several electronic filing systems will be available to court litigants. The Clerk of the Court has a system for electronic filing, and the court has offered contracts to three private vendors, which are in the process of completion and signing. These private vendor systems will be integrated into the Clerk of Court's system. In the family court, we are also developing forms that can be filled out by litigants on-line, which will then be able to be filed electronically.

By 2008, electronic filing will be mandatory for all attorneys practicing in the Superior Court and Justice Courts. For persons representing themselves without the means to do electronic filing, the Clerk of Court will continue to take paper filings and then scan them into the electronic system.

This effort has been a Joint Project of the Clerk of Court and the Superior Court. It has been in the planning stages for several years.