

MONTANA STATEWIDE E-FILING

OFFICE OF THE COURT ADMINISTRATOR

MISSOULA AND MINERAL COUNTY DISTRICT COURTS NOW LIVE

Pilot Underway of Phase 1 Cases

Montana Courts Electronic Filing debuted at the first trial court on Monday, September 26th, 2016. That morning, at the Missoula County District Court, the first electronic filings were submitted by public defender and Missoula County Attorney

offices. The filings arrived at the court in an electronic “clerk review queue” from which the clerks evaluated, approved and processed the filings for both

new and existing cases.

Motions and other filings ripe for decision were routed to a judge for signature. The judges and their administrative staff accessed the filings from an electronic “review queue” to make a decision and sign orders.

From filing submission to acceptance as part of the

court record, documents are not required to be put to paper. The court case itself is electronic, meaning that eventually there will be no need for paper file folders nor their storage.

On Tuesday, December 20th, 2016, E-Filing launched at Mineral County District Court, completing the Phase 1 Pilot of the district courts of the 4th Judicial District.

**PHASE 1 CASES OF
CRIMINAL, JUVENILE,
ABUSE AND NEGLECT,
INVOLUNTARY
COMMITMENT AND
DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITY NOW
AVAILABLE FOR E-FILING**

Judges Adapt

Electronic court records provide many benefits, but create a challenge for judges on the bench who no longer have paper files in front of them, especially for a law and motion calendar with scores of cases on the schedule. While the court case management system contains all the

SUPREME COURT NOW LIVE FOR CIVIL E-FILING

All filings on all cases can now be e-filed at the Supreme Court. Starting on December 8th, 2016, all case types are enabled for e-filing, including direct appeals of civil cases in which a payment or fee waiver is required to initiate a case. When filing a new case, the attorney is redirected to a secure payment processor where payment is made and is then returned to the E-Filing system for submission and payment receipts. An attorney may choose to make a one-time payment for the instant case, or can set up an e-wallet which can also be used in the future. See [instructions](#) on our webpage or contact [Rex Renk](#) 406.444.3858 for more information.

documents and information about each case, it was never designed to give quick, on-the-bench access to documents in cases that are called in quick succession. The pioneering 4th Judicial District judges are now using a bench tool called "Images Quick" to

access all their cases electronically.

Initial Goals Realized

Part of the reason for a pilot is to assess how well the delivered solutions meet the day-to-day business needs of the court community. While

there have been a few bumps that are tackled as they arise, much of the credit goes to the outstanding willingness and receptivity of the clerk of court and judges and the entire court community for making the project a success so far.

E-FILING BY THE NUMBERS

End-of-year statistics

Supreme Court filings since 11/24/14:

12066 filings on 945 cases

Missoula County District Court filings since 9/23/16:

4374 filings on 1133 cases

Mineral County District Court filings since 12/19/16:

50 filings on 16 cases

634 Total Active, Registered E-Filers:

1 Chief/6 Supreme Court Justices

1 Clerk of the Supreme Court

37 Clerks of District Court

277 Prosecutors/Attorneys

42 Court Reporters

48 Case Participants

222 Authorized Staff

WHAT'S NEXT?

Missoula Municipal in the wings

The first limited jurisdiction court to deploy E-Filing is on schedule for go-live at the end of January, 2017. Missoula Municipal Court Judge Kathleen Jenks has long been eager to move forward with E-Filing, and project management is eager to gain experience working with a limited jurisdiction court. Phase 1 of the pilot at Missoula Municipal will involve criminal cases only.

Civil Case Development Underway

Civil case workflows will be the focus of attention over the next few months as we convene meetings with stakeholders from around the state to assist with defining E-Filing requirements. Topics include security, common workflows, and any gaps that may exist in the proposed deliverables. An important addition to E-Filing with civil cases is the integration of a

secure payment processor to collect statutory filing and appearance fees.

Reminder of some of the many E-Filing Benefits

- Secure 24x7 filing from any location.
- Efficient access to the court record.
- Reduce paper, trips to the courthouse and storage; this alone often reduces litigant costs.
- Improves record quality.
- Protects court record from catastrophic events.

More information can be found at [Montana Courts E-Filing](#) or contact Lois Schlyer by [email](#) or phone (406)841.2962.