



Supreme Court of Illinois

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CHIEF JUSTICE KILBRIDE ANNOUNCES E-FILING PROJECT IN SUPREME COURT

Chief Justice Thomas L. Kilbride announced Thursday a pilot project for the electronic filing of documents with the Illinois Supreme Court.

The specific project approved by the Supreme Court allows the Illinois Attorney General, the State Appellate Defender's Office and the Office of the Illinois State's Attorneys Appellate Prosecutor to digitally file motions, briefs and related documents with the Clerk of the Court through a secure password system designed and operated by a third-party vendor.

While restricted now to only those offices when they represent parties opposed to each other in the same case, the pilot project is planned to be the basis for a program to be extended to all parties and litigants filing in the Illinois Supreme Court, eventually resulting in the savings of tens of thousands of pages of paper documents.

"This is an important step to get e-filing started in the Illinois Supreme Court," said Chief Justice Kilbride. "This pilot project will test a new e-filing system and give the Court first-hand experience with the benefits e-filing can bring to the judiciary. With it, we hope to build a more efficient way of doing legal business in our state's highest court and extend that benefit to parties, litigants, all courts and taxpayers."

The pilot project is another step in the continuing initiative of Chief Justice Kilbride to move the Illinois court system into the digital age with court efficiencies and related cost savings to users and Illinois taxpayers.

Other initiatives have included making an electronic record available in the 2nd and 4th Appellate Districts in cases from DuPage, Ogle and Adams counties; moving to a public domain citation system of appellate and Supreme Court cases; and posting online the Pattern Jury Instructions for civil and criminal cases in Illinois. In addition, at the recommendation of Chief Justice Kilbride, the Supreme Court established a Special Committee on E-Business which, among other things, is charged with continuing to recommend ways to expand e-filing in the Circuit Courts in Illinois.

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"The Supreme Court's new e-filing system is a significant and exciting innovation that promises to make practice before the Court even easier and more efficient," said Solicitor General Michael A. Scodro, who handles appeals for the state through the office of the Attorney General. "The Attorney General's Office looks forward to working with the Chief Justice, the Court, and the Supreme Court Clerk's Office as a participant in the system's pilot program".

Michael J. Pelletier, director of the State Appellate Defender's Office, also lauded the start of the project.

"I can't say anything but good things about it," said Mr. Pelletier. "I'm very pleased that the Chief Justice and the Supreme Court are going forward with this. They will get our utmost cooperation to make it work."

The pilot project becomes effective immediately. It is supported by a system developed by i2File, a company which now supports e-filing experimental projects in DuPage, Ogle and Will Counties. The Supreme Court project will support the filing of virtually all legal documents in a text searchable .pdf format. In announcing the project, the Court also released an Electronic Filing User Manual, which explains the system and procedures.

Carolyn Taft Grosboll, Clerk of the Supreme Court, anticipates the electronic filing of documents associated with 35 to 40 new Petitions of Leave to Appeal under the experimental project. In addition, the three agencies are involved in six to 10 cases currently before the Court.

"Electronic filing is an important step to modernize the way documents are filed with the Supreme Court, resulting in a simplified process for parties seeking relief from the Court," said Ms. Grosboll. "We are pleased to offer this technology and to provide the citizens of Illinois more efficient access to the Court."

Pat Delfino, director of the state attorney's prosecutor's office, welcomed the initiative as well.

"We appreciate these efforts of the Chief Justice, the Court, and the Clerk," said Delfino. "It's something we've been waiting for and we're glad it's here. It's going to make our work more effective, more efficient and help serve our clients—the state's attorneys of Illinois—in better fashion."

Virtually all documents associated with matters before the Supreme Court will be able to be filed electronically by these offices.

The confidential, secure username and password that the registered user must use to e-file a document constitute the registered user's signature on the document. Upon submittal of the e-filed document, the e-filing provider will provide the registered user with a transaction number followed by an e-mailed transaction confirmation that includes the transaction number, a list of documents submitted and the date and time of submittal. The transaction confirmation shall serve as proof of submittal.

A document will be considered timely submitted if e-filed at any time before midnight on or before the date on which the document is due.

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For attorneys who are electronically filing, that means no last minute scurrying to the Clerk's Office or the Post Office before the close of business.

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