

**Agency: Alaska Court System****Project Title:****Project Type:** Information Systems and Technology

# Electronic Filing System

**State Funding Requested: \$1,830,000****House District:** Statewide (1-40)

Future Funding May Be Requested

**Brief Project Description:**

Implementation of an electronic filing and document management system.

**Funding Plan:**

Total Project Cost:	\$7,180,000
Funding Already Secured:	(\$0)
FY2012 State Funding Request:	(\$1,830,000)
Project Deficit:	\$5,350,000

*Funding Details:**This is a first year funding request.***Detailed Project Description and Justification:**

To keep up with its workload without adding employees, the court needs funding to implement an electronic filing system. This system would include an electronic document management system and would be fully integrated with the trial court case management system.

Today, most attorneys prepare word processing documents, print them out, and physically deliver them to the courthouse with the appropriate filing fees and instructions. Court clerks review the documents, accept payments, type information into the court's case management system, and place the documents into a case jacket. Case files are routed to the appropriate judge or staff for processing until the case is closed. Eventually, closed case files are routed to a central location for scanning, so that images of the documents are stored in an electronically accessible format. With electronic filing, documents are prepared in much the same way, but are sent and stored electronically, allowing the case to be managed electronically from initiation through final disposition and archiving.

**Benefits of an E-Filing System:**

Convenient and easy for lawyers to file cases and documents with the court  
 Better customer service: more complete, accurate case information is easily and immediately retrievable, at less cost to the court and to the customer  
 Staff efficiencies: less time copying, searching, moving, and tracking paper files  
 Cost savings in terms of file cabinets, folders, paper, postage  
 Files may be electronically accessed simultaneously by multiple people at the same time  
 More secure - electronic case files can be duplicated and stored in multiple locations for more flexible disaster recovery planning

**Components of an E-Filing System:**

An important component of electronic filing is the document management system. This is the place where electronic filings are stored. It doesn't make sense for the court to accept documents electronically if it is not prepared to use them in their electronic form. Otherwise, the time and expense of printing documents is simply transferred to the judiciary. An integrated case management system is also needed in order to track cases, documents, filing fees, judicial assignments and other events, as well as producing statistical, financial and management reports. The case management system also provides an index/retrieval mechanism for records in the document management system. In an electronic filing environment, the case and document management systems are integrated so that information is shared automatically, without the extra time, expense, and risk of errors caused by rekeying data from paper into multiple systems.

The court system seeks funding for a multi-year project to implement the following components:

#### Track 1. E-Document Management System (E-DMS)

To implement an e-document management system, the court will: (1) scan paper documents/filings as they come in ("front end" scanning); (2) receive and send electronically-generated (word processing, PDF) documents; and (3) index electronic documents for search/retrieval from any court location. The front-end scanning will be implemented first as a pilot project in Anchorage, and then statewide. Anchorage was selected for the pilot because of the current challenges facing the clerk's office, which must move paper case files back and forth between two separate courthouses. The court will also catch up on "back end" scanning to eliminate the 2+ year backlog for converting closed paper files to electronic format.

#### Track 2. Integrated Case Management System (CMS)

The court needs to replace or significantly enhance the current case management system in order to integrate it with e-filing and document management systems. Despite improvements in automation attained by statewide rollout of the current system, case processing still entails copying, mailing, and moving paper files in addition to keying data into the automated system. Although the current case management system has made more case information electronically accessible on line, it is difficult to use, expensive to modify, and difficult to integrate with modern technologies that allow electronic creation and management of e-documents. The court will analyze case management needs and options, decide whether to buy or build new system components, develop an implementation plan, and deploy the new system statewide.

#### Track 3. E-Filing

E-filing will be implemented in phases. Initially, "basic" e-filing will be achieved by manually entering key data from electronic documents into the current case management system (indexing) and creating links to the documents using "attachment" software. Next the court will deploy "smart forms" that will capture the index data and other basic case information at the time electronic documents are filed, thus reducing the amount of manual processing needed to link the documents to the CMS. Finally, the smart forms, DMS, and new CMS will be fully integrated, allowing fully automated case processing from e-filed data and documents.

#### Capital Project Spending Plan:

In FY12 the court will purchase and install equipment and software necessary for a pilot "front end" scanning project in Anchorage. A project manager and analyst programmer will work with Anchorage trial court staff to implement a system with existing clerical staff that will allow Anchorage court cases to be electronically accessed from any location. Four

temporary positions are also needed to eliminate the backlog of 1-2 years for imaging closed paper case files sent to Anchorage from courts around the state, which are also electronically accessible from any location. Electronic access relieves clerks from searching, copying, and moving paper files. The court will hire a project manager to assist the court in deciding whether to buy or build components for a new Case Management System (CMS), or enhance the existing system. The court will pay for system architect services to implement "basic" e-filing (accept electronic documents as attachments to email). System architecture consultation services are needed to ensure that e-filing satisfies court and filer needs for ease of use, data integrity, and security, and can be extended to fully automated filing in future years.

In FY13, the Anchorage pilot will be expanded to include "front end" scanning statewide. The court will purchase and deploy the remaining scanners, printers, and software. Technicians will travel to install and provide training statewide. The court will procure either professional services to build the new/enhanced CMS components, or will purchase (and customize) an "off-the-shelf" system or system components. E-filing will evolve to include "smart forms" (using software the court has already purchased in FY11) that further reduce manual data entry to index electronic documents submitted to the court. The court has a contract in place for system architect, developer, and staff developer training services to accomplish this, but will need funding to amend the contract for this additional work in FY13.

In FY 14-16, the court will continue to purchase services, components, and integration services, and pay for travel and training, to implement the fully integrated e-filing system, e-document management system, and new case management system, including fully automated filing that significantly reduces or eliminates the need for manual data entry by court staff to initiate and begin processing a court case.

The project is expected to affect long term operating costs for increased network bandwidth, hardware replacement, software maintenance, and staff training.

### Project Timeline:

FY12 - \$1,830,000; FY13 - \$1,355,000; FY14 - \$1,305,000; FY15 - \$1,330,000; FY16 - \$1,360,000.

### Entity Responsible for the Ongoing Operation and Maintenance of this Project:

The Alaska Court System.

### Grant Recipient Contact Information:

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Has this project been through a public review process at the local level and is it a community priority?  Yes  No