

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS
STATE OF NEW JERSEY

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P.O. Box 037
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March 19, 2009

Members of the N.J. Bar Who Filed 1,000 or More
Special Civil Part Complaints in 2008 (List Attached)

Re: Mandatory Electronic Filing in Special Civil Part

Dear Member of the Bar:

I want to take this opportunity to tell you personally about the two-part plan recently approved by the New Jersey Supreme Court to implement mandatory electronic filing in the Special Civil Part for civil actions involving \$15,000 or less, commonly referred to as DC docket-type cases.

As you no doubt know, we have been operating the Judiciary Electronic Filing & Imaging System (JEFIS) as a voluntary electronic filing program for these cases during the last eight years. Attorneys have been instrumental in the development and ongoing enhancement of the program and at this point 54% of the 385,000 DC complaints filed annually are being filed electronically. We will soon process the 3 millionth electronically filed document, but we need to dramatically increase the electronic filing volume of both complaints and non-complaints to realize the full potential of the system. This is critically important in the current context of shrinking budgets.

The first phase of the plan approved by the Supreme Court to accomplish this will take one year to implement. In this phase your law firm and the other 32 firms who filed 1,000 or more complaints in 2008 will be required, as of May 17, 2010, (approximately one year from the March 10, 2009 entry date of the Supreme Court's order), to file all Special Civil Part pleadings in DC docket-type cases electronically via JEFIS. These law firms accounted for 75% of the nearly 385,000 cases filed in this court during 2008. When 75% of all DC pleadings are filed electronically, the number of paper documents that have to be scanned by court staff will be reduced by 60%, so this initiative is strategically important for the continued efficiency of the Special Civil Part. Copies of the Supreme Court's order on this subject and the accompanying Notice to the Bar are attached. As described in the Notice, the AOC will assist you and the other affected law firms during the course of the year to meet the Supreme Court's deadline. The second phase of the plan to implement mandatory electronic filing will involve the firms who file less than 1,000 cases annually and it will be developed during execution of the first phase.

As indicated in the Notice to the Bar, several enhancements are being made to JEFIS to make it more useful to you, including remote access from your office to the electronic case jackets for

your firm's cases, automation of the monthly statements for the collateral accounts you use to pay filing fees and on-line access to real-time balances in these accounts. Giving you remote access to the electronic case jackets should not only be a convenience for you – it will reduce the number of inquiries by telephone and letter to the Special Civil Part Clerks' offices regarding case status. These enhancements should be ready in December 2009.

The application currently used by JEFIS attorneys to file complaints and other documents electronically has been rewritten as a result of our experience with JEFIS over the last decade. The new application will be implemented over the course of the next 12 months simultaneously with the Supreme Court's mandatory e-filing order. The application currently used by attorneys requires electronic filers to submit additional data only with complaints. This data includes information about the case that is used (1) to speed entry of the complaints into the Automated Case Management System (ACMS) by court staff, (2) to generate the summons and (3) later for case management purposes. The new application will require attorneys to provide additional data with non-complaint documents, as well as complaints, to speed their entry by staff into ACMS. Work on these enhancements to JEFIS has been completed. The additional data for non-complaints will be provided by attorneys as they complete the transition from the current attorney application to the new one and all high-volume attorneys will have completed this transition by May 17, 2010. Please note that additional data will eventually be required for wage and chattel executions, but no date has yet been set for the completion of that particular enhancement.

A representative of the AOC's Automated Trial Court Systems Unit (ATCSU) will be contacting you shortly with more information about this program, including the technical requirements for filing both complaints and non-complaints electronically through JEFIS and preliminary planning that the firm must undertake before JEFIS consultants make a visit to your office to help with the transition process. In April, the AOC will host informational meetings for the 33 affected firms that will include a demonstration of e-filing and an opportunity for you and your support staff (including IT managers) to ask questions.

I look forward to working in partnership with you and the 32 other law firms to make this year-long transition as easy as possible and I thank you in advance for your anticipated cooperation.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Glenn A. Grant

Glenn A. Grant, J.A.D.

Enclosure (List of Affected Firms)

cc:	Chief Justice Stuart Rabner	John Stracquatano, Project Manager
	Peggy Sheahan Knee, NJSBA President	Jane F. Castner, Interim Acting Director/Ass't Director
	Angela Scheck, NJSBA Exec. Director	Robert D. Pitt, Chief
	David P. Anderson, Jr., Director	John P. McCarthy III, Chief
	James R. Rebo, Director	Steven D. Bonville, Special Assistant
	Lisa Mollica, Assistant Director	Francis W. Hoeber, Special Assistant