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JEFIS Participants Obtain Free Access to Civil Case Database

Law firms and attorneys who participate in the Judiciary's Electronic Filing and Imaging (JEFIS) program now have free access to the courts' Automated Case Management System (ACMS), announced Judge Philip S. Carchman, acting administrative director of the courts.

ACMS users, including attorneys, are charged a user fee for accessing the system online. As an incentive to encourage more firms to sign up for JEFIS, the fee is being waived for JEFIS participants.

The Judiciary Electronic Filing and Imaging System (JEFIS) is a paperless system for filing and managing special civil cases, which are civil cases valued at between \$3,000 and \$15,000. Almost half of the one million cases filed each year in Superior Court are filed in the Special Civil Part.

JEFIS eliminates the need to store hard copies of papers filed in those cases. Instead, documents are filed electronically, or are scanned into electronic images, and stored in electronic case jackets. In addition, electronic filing eliminates the need for court staff to manually enter case information into ACMS, providing greater efficiency and fewer clerical errors at a critical point in case processing. With free access to ACMS, attorneys can check the status of their cases at any time.

The electronic case jackets now contain all documents, whether filed electronically or on paper, and are accessible to the parties, the judge and court staff at any time, further expediting case processing. The public can view these cases from public terminals located in each court house. Electronic filing saves attorneys time, effort and cost in delivering documents to the courts. Those savings can be passed on to litigants.

Currently, 158 law firms have filed nearly 2 million documents using JEFIS, and nearly 50 percent of eligible cases are being filed electronically. The Judiciary soon will begin working to make JEFIS available for additional case types.

Attorneys can find information and instructions on how to file electronically at njcourtsonline.com.

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