



# News Release

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## Judiciary Launches eCourts Initiative

The New Jersey Judiciary has begun accepting motions in criminal cases electronically, an important step forward in the state courts' efforts to provide efficient and cost-effective justice, Chief Justice Stuart Rabner announced today.

"We are making progress in our efforts to become a paperless court system," said Chief Justice Rabner. "eCourts was developed to improve our ability to serve litigants, attorneys, and the public with a user-friendly system of electronic filing and case management. The electronic filing of criminal motions moves us further in that direction."

The Judiciary's eCourts system was developed to accept motions and accompanying documents filed online, to provide real-time remote access to electronic case filings to judges, attorneys, and court staff simultaneously, and to store and retrieve electronic documents after the case has concluded.

The Judiciary has begun implementing eCourts for use with motions for which a filing fee is not required in criminal cases filed in ten counties. Full statewide implementation of eCourts for those types of motions is expected to be complete by the end of July. At this time, only prosecutors, public defenders, and attorneys in good standing who have registered in advance can use the system. As resources allow, the Judiciary's eCourts system will be enhanced to allow its use in other case types.

Over time, the eCourts initiative will prove itself not only convenient, but fiscally sound. Electronic filing will reduce the costs associated with filing case documents, sending court notices through the mail, and storing paper files. It will streamline the work of judges and court staff and allow for greater public access to the courts.

The system is the result of a multi-year project led by the Information Technology Advisory Committee chaired by Judge Glenn A. Grant, acting administrative director of the courts. Its goals were laid out in the 2009 report of the Special Committee on Electronic Filing, formed by Chief Justice Rabner in 2008.

The committee suggested that the courts should develop a comprehensive e-filing system that addresses document filing, case management, records management, and public access aspects of court work. They recommended that the courts adopt a standard format for e-filing so that attorneys, judges, court staff and others can become familiar with one system even if they work in different practice areas. The system should enable remote access to case files for judges, attorneys, court staff, and others, and it should be Web-enabled for maximum accessibility.

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