



State of Kansas

Office of Judicial Administration

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Kansas eCourt

HB 2338 created the Electronic Filing and Management Fund and directs that expenditures from the fund be used to create, implement, and manage an electronic filing and centralized case management system. For FY 2015, 2016, and 2017, the bill directs the first \$3.1 million of docket fees received by the state treasurer to the fund. Beginning in FY 2018, the first \$1 million of the docket fees received shall be directed to the fund. The fund began receiving revenue in July 2014.

Kansas eCourt Vision

The Kansas eCourt will use technology to shift the present paper-based system to an electronic based system. The Kansas eCourt will provide judges and litigants with immediate access to authorized case information, details, and records provided by the Kansas courts. Our traditional courts have operated within a paper-based system where information and documents could only be accessed at a single courthouse during the eight hour business day.

The Kansas eCourt, when fully implemented, will provide some of the most frequently requested court services from any computer with an Internet connection, at any time. Based on an individual's authorization, consumers and the legal community will have day and night access to:

- documents and case records,
- court information and court calendars, and
- case-related filing and payment services.

The Kansas eCourt would also be a foundation that we are able to build upon in the future. For example, if the courts were to install a statewide videoconferencing system, it would be integrated into the eCourt system that could be accessed through the eCourt portal.

The Kansas eCourt will supplement, rather than replace, in-person services at our courthouses. Those traditional services will remain available. Court hearings and trials will continue to convene in courthouses across the state and will be open to the public.

Key Technology Strategies

The Kansas eCourt vision will be supported by a number of interconnected technology strategies. All of these strategies need to be extendable. The key technology strategies are described below:

- *Web Portal.* The web portal is the front door behind which all eCourt services will be provided. The web portal will be the path for interacting with the Judicial Branch, both internally and externally.
- *Centralized Case Management System.* The centralized case management system (CCMS) is the foundation for this project. CCMS will transform how court staff conducts daily court business. Since court functions will be centralized and standardized, it will allow court staff to process cases independent of geographic location. This would allow clerks statewide to share workloads and resources.
- *Electronic Filing.* Electronic filing, or e-filing, is a method of filing court documents that uses an electronic format rather than a traditional paper format. Parties convert their documents into the Judicial Branch file format and file their documents over the Internet. Electronic filing will allow attorneys with internet access to file and view documents and obtain other case information day and night. Notifications will automatically be e-mailed to all registered parties when there has been any activity on a case.
- *Debt Collection.* The role of a CCMS in debt collection was recognized by the National Center for State Courts' consultants who produced the December 2012 grant-funded report, *Process Review of Court-Ordered Monetary Sanctions for the Kansas Judicial Branch*. The report notes that regional or centralized staff could be used to perform debt collections work, as has occurred in other states. The report states that, "[d]riven in part by population shifts away from rural areas, budget reductions, and the desire to maintain minimum court services in rural areas, these states [South Dakota and Nebraska] have referred work from busier jurisdictions to those who have relatively low volumes of work." Report at 26. The report further recommends implementing the CCMS "to enable collection and analysis of statewide collection data and allow work-sharing across courts." Report at 27.
- *Videoconferencing/Video Courts.* Videoconferencing has the potential to make better use of taxpayer resources by:
 - Reducing travel for courtroom participants;
 - increasing the efficiency of legal proceedings;
 - saving prisoner and patient transportation costs;
 - reducing logistical barriers to conducting meetings; and
 - providing access to additional training and educational opportunities.
- *Language Access.* K.S.A. 75-4351 requires that qualified interpreters be provided in both criminal and civil proceedings. The CCMS will provide the

following improved functionality:

- Clear and consistent case flagging of interpreter need at the earliest time possible in the proceedings,
- interpreter scheduling by court clerks, and
- collection of a wide range of interpreter data accessible to the court through electronic reports.