

History of the E-Filing Mandate

eFileTexas.gov was created to provide an efficient, cost effective and reliable platform for submitting and processing court documents electronically. The Supreme Court of Texas mandated electronic filing (e-filing) in all civil cases on a rolling schedule in December of 2012. All courts in the state will be e-filing by 2016.

The mandate began for Texas' 10 most populous counties and all appellate courts on January 1, 2014. On that day, Texas became the largest state in the country to implement a mandatory e-filing system for its courts.

The eFileTexas.gov system has been up and running since it first went live in June of 2013 in Gregg County. Below are some statistics about usage on eFileTexas.gov since January 1, 2014.

Usage

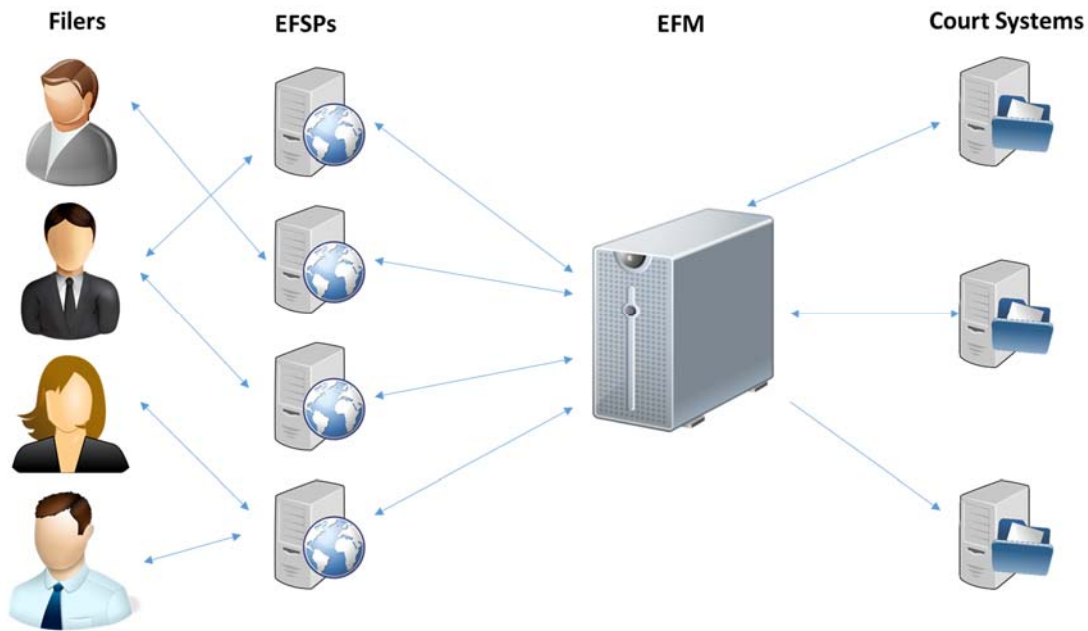
- More than 2,000,000 filings – on average 18,000 filings each day
- Expected to handle 3.5 million filings in 2014
- Since January 1, the system has saved 13 million pages of paper
- E-filing saves more than 2.5 pallets of paper per week
- Will save 24 million pages of paper in 2014 or 25 times the height of the Texas capitol building
- More than 74,000 registered users
- 72 counties live on the system
- 201 courts live on the system

Benefits

- Quicker access to e-filed documents
- Increased efficiency for attorneys and litigants
- Reduced printing and mailing costs
- Reduced storage costs for clerks
- Greater security of court documents in the event of disaster
- More efficient use of court staff
- Increased transparency and access to courts

How eFileTexas.gov Works

eFileTexas.gov is a system that accepts electronic documents from attorneys (as pdfs) and other filers via Web portals, and securely distributes these documents to the appropriate county or appellate court where they can be accepted into the case management system of that court.



There are three basic components to this system:

EFSPs – E-filing Service Providers (EFSPs) are vendors that provide Web portals for filers to use to submit documents into the eFileTexas.gov system. Filers register with one or more of these EFSPs to submit documents. These EFSPs offer other services in addition to submitting documents to eFileTexas.gov, and they charge for these services. The state of Texas also offers an EFSP service for submitting documents. It is offered for free and is called eFile.TXCourts.gov. There are currently 12 EFSPs in operation today.

EFM – The e-filing Manager (EFM) is the system that accepts filings from the EFSPs and distributes them to the various county and appellate courts. Court clerks must log into the EFM to review and accept filings. Courts can also connect and integrate their case management systems to the eFileTexas.gov EFM and receive filings directly to their systems.

CMS – Case Management Systems (CMS) are the systems courts use to manage all the cases in their jurisdiction. This includes information about the parties involved, hearings, filings, evidence etc. These systems are created and maintained by a variety of vendors or by the county and can be connected with eFileTexas.gov so that they share information.