

Maricopa Lawyer
Clerk's Corner
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Accessing Court Records Online

The extent of access to public records is an ongoing conversation in Arizona and around the country. Convenient access to records must be balanced with the protection of personal information, and the traditional concept of records is being reconsidered in light of available and future technologies. The result is a mix of levels of access nationwide. The ability to view court records ranges from widely available to not available at all, from subscription services and per-page charges to unlimited, free access.

In the Superior Court in Maricopa County, most minute entries are available for viewing online at <http://courtminutes.maricopa.gov/>. The docket of pleadings filed in a civil, criminal, family or probate case is available online from the superior court's website at <http://www.superiorcourt.maricopa.gov/docket/index.asp>. The online docket lists documents filed, but no images are available from this website. The superior court's online docket also lists documents filed in justice courts.

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) takes the online docket one step farther by drawing some data elements from most courts in the state. A name search on the AOC's Public Access to Court Information website will return related court cases from around the state. The AOC's website is located at <http://www.supreme.state.az.us/publicaccess/notification/default.asp>. Because the AOC's system does not draw all data elements from all courts, it is important to check with the specific court hearing the case for the complete and official court record.

Public records can be viewed through public access terminals available at four Clerk's Office locations around the valley during regular business hours. Images of public court records in adult case types are available for cases initiated in 2002 and more recently. The image of recently filed documents in older cases may be available, as all public records filed with the Clerk's Office are being digitized into the electronic court repository.

Remote access to public records is also available in limited situations. To view public records online in adult case types, attorneys and parties to their cases can register with the Clerk's Electronic Court Record Online (ECR Online).

In adult case types, ECR Online allows access via the internet to view documents filed on an attorney or party's own cases and cases on which members of the attorney's firm are the attorney of record. Attorneys registered in ECR Online are allowed to keep up to 100 cases at a time on their viewing list. Sealed or confidential documents are not available online and require a court order to view.

If an attorney has a user name and password for the Clerk's eFiling Online "live" site, the same user name and password should be entered when registering at the ECR Online website: <https://ecr.clerkofcourt.maricopa.gov/login.aspx>.

Fee Change Reminder

Under the budget passed by the legislature at the end of the 2008 session, a base increase to fees in the Superior Court will result in approximately a 44% rise in the underlying fees for filing in Superior Court. In addition to base fees, Maricopa County has local fees to pay for automating court records and processes as well as to provide other services to the public. The new fee amounts take effect on the general effective date of the legislation, Friday, September 26, 2008. A listing of the fees effective September 26, 2008 is now posted on the Clerk's website at www.clerkofcourt.maricopa.gov.

Complex Civil Litigation Reminder

Attorneys involved in the eFiling pilot for complex civil litigation cases will transition away from the LexisNexis File & Serve application. eFiling in complex civil litigation cases will continue, but the contract with LexisNexis expires on September 8, 2008. Individual contracts that attorneys or firms have with LexisNexis for other services are not effected by this change. eFiling in these cases will continue through approved vendors or through the Clerk's eFiling Online system. More information is available at www.clerkofcourt.maricopa.gov/efiling/.