

By Michael K. Jeanes, Clerk of the Superior Court

New Year Brings New, Improved Facilities and Services

Paper and electronic processes will be part of the improvements you will see from the Clerk's Office in 2013. Newly remodeled file counters and lobby space in downtown Phoenix will enhance the overall experience and timeliness of interacting with the clerks. eFiling will be available in additional case types and divisions and more documents will be added to the electronic court record as additional case types join the scanning process and older documents continue to be back-scanned and added to the repository. The Clerk's Office looks forward to providing these improved resources and services and encourages you to provide your feedback. Contact us through the Clerk's website at www.clerkofcourt.maricopa.gov.

West Court File Counter Remodel

The first phase of construction is complete and non-criminal file counters (civil, family, tax and probate) are now available on the first floor of the West Court Building. The new space includes file counters and a public lobby designed to better serve our customers. The area can be accessed from the Central Court Building in downtown Phoenix. A file counter will also remain at the Old Courthouse as another option for all Probate and Mental Health filings.

eFiling in Family Court

Permissive eFiling expanded to all family court divisions on December 1. Attorneys and self-represented parties may now electronically file post-initiation family court documents in any family court case in the Superior Court in Maricopa County. The expansion allows parties or their attorneys to choose which documents to eFile after the case is initiated on paper. Family court documents are eFiled through the Clerk's eFiling Online website, not AZTurboCourt. See the Clerk's website for more information about eFiling: <http://clerkofcourt.maricopa.gov/efiling/default.asp>.

The Family Court section of the eFiling Guidelines on the Clerk's website provides important information about format and what can and cannot be eFiled. Similar to depository box filings, eFilings that require payment of a fee must be paid at a Clerk's facility or over the phone within one business day of eFiling or they will be rejected for non-payment and the original submission date and time will be lost.

Electronic Court Record in Juvenile Cases

On October 1 the Clerk's Office began transitioning from paper records to an electronic court record (ECR) in the juvenile guardianship case type, meaning paper documents will no longer be placed into a hard copy file. Instead, paper documents will be scanned, audited, and disposed of after a series of quality checks and the ECR will be the official

court record, eliminating the need to maintain and store thousands of paper juvenile documents in hard copy files. The Juvenile ECR will be implemented in several phases, continuing through 2013.

The juvenile ECR project does not change the confidentiality of juvenile records. Access to records remains the same, only the format is changing. Juvenile records are available at the Clerk of the Court's juvenile facilities at Durango Street in Phoenix and on Lewis Drive in Mesa.

Expanded ECR

The Clerk's largest-ever scanning project continues through 2013, projected to add over 50 million images to the Electronic Court Record. The two-year project that began in July of 2012 will eliminate thousands of square feet of files and file shelving and double the size of the Office's electronic records repository. The conversion of these records will enhance access to the records for judicial officers, court employees and the public; increase security of the records; reduce or eliminate accidental damage and lost or misplaced documents; and improve long-term storage and physical space for the Office's growth and the millions of records it manages.