

THE

BRIEF

Vol. 2, No. 7

An electronic update for the legal community providing a brief look at news in the Clerk of the Superior Court's Office



August 2006

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Unsigned Minute Entries Promote ECR

With the Superior Court's approval, the Electronic Court Record (ECR) received a boost in August, as the Clerk's Office began eFiling unsigned minute entries. eFiling unsigned minute entries is the single highest volume eFiling event to date, and changes the paper court record as it is known in Maricopa County.

On average, 85 percent of minute entries are unsigned. Unsigned minute entries will now automatically be eFiled. This eliminates paper, reduces manual labor, and saves precious storage space. The effect of eFiling unsigned minute entries is that the electronic record becomes the complete court record. In all adult case types, no physical case file will include a paper unsigned minute entry after August 1, 2006.

Without paper, the electronic image becomes the original. This business process is more secure and reliable than the traditional paper process. The Clerk's Office can authenticate an eFiled minute entry, allowing customers to obtain a certified paper copy of the electronic original if necessary. The Clerk reminds customers to view the ECR from a public access terminal to ensure they are aware of all the filings in the case. Public access terminals are located in four court facilities around the Valley, and Clerk's staff are available to assist and answer questions. The Office is working to allow litigants and their attorneys internet access to the ECR on their individual cases, eliminating the need to travel to a public access terminal.

Criminal eFiling for Private Bar

County agencies have been eFiling in DUI and select criminal courts since April 2005, with recent expansion to all criminal trial divisions at the Southeast adult court facility in Mesa. To expand eFiling to more customers interested in its use, the Clerk and Court will soon allow private counsel to eFile in additional criminal court trial divisions.

While every criminal trial division will soon be capable of accepting eFilings, each division will determine the best way to use eFiling as a court management tool. Criminal case types are a logical place to expand eFiling because of the low percentage of pro se litigants who may not have readily-available access to technology.

eFiling Website Getting New Look

The eFiling application will have a new look in the coming months. Those who have been eFiling will notice the web page appears differently than before, but the underlying system operates the same. The Clerk has developed a new interface that will provide enhanced operation and will serve as a gateway to both general civil and criminal eFiling.

The website address remains the same: <https://efiling.clerkofcourt.maricopa.gov/main.asp> From this site, you will enter the case number on which you are filing and the system will direct you automatically to the appropriate eFiling system: civil or criminal. The Clerk's Office is working with vendors who will soon provide eFiling in general civil cases. eFiling in complex civil cases remains a separate pilot program using a third-party vendor.