



eFiling Expansion

Supreme Court Administrative Order 2008-89 allows attorneys and self-represented parties to electronically file certain documents in civil court cases in the Superior Court in Maricopa County, effective December 1, 2008. It was previously thought that family court would be involved in the first phase of the permissive eFiling pilot; however, permissive eFiling will only be expanded to civil court cases in this phase of the pilot program.

Documents that may not be electronically filed are listed in the Electronic Filing Guidelines (eFiling Guidelines), maintained by the Clerk's Office at <https://efiling.clerkofcourt.maricopa.gov/efilingguidelines/>. The new pilot expanding electronic filing is a "permissive" eFiling initiative, meaning attorneys and self-represented parties may choose to electronically file, but may also choose to file in paper or use a combination of electronic and paper filing methods. Civil court judges are prepared to accept electronic filings from attorneys and parties who choose to eFile in cases under the terms of the permissive eFiling pilot program.

In the permissive eFiling pilot program, authorized documents may be filed electronically with the Clerk's eFiling Online website or through the third-party vendor, Wiznet. More information on eFiling providers is available online at <http://clerkofcourt.maricopa.gov/efiling/default.asp>.

Permissive eFiling will not be available in the following case types: family, probate, mental health, tax, juvenile matters, special actions, transfers of jurisdiction or lower court appeals cases. In addition, mandatory eFiling continues in limited civil case type divisions where general and complex civil cases are designated for eFiling by individual minute entries. Four family court divisions are accepting eFilings on a pilot basis, but eFilings are not being accepted by all family court divisions. To verify a judicial division's participation in eFiling, contact the division.

File names in eFiling

The path name that files are saved with are critical to the ability to successfully eFile. Path names are what documents are "called" when they are saved. For example, "Court Records 2008.doc" is the path name for a document drafted in Microsoft Word. When uploading documents on the eFiling website, the Clerk's system only reads the path name to the first period and then determines the file type in which the document is saved. Common path name errors are:

- "Smith v. Jones.doc"
- "Smith vs. Jones.doc"
- "Smithv.Jones.doc"

In each example, the eFiling system only reads three characters beyond the first period in an attempt to determine the file type of the document. Using a period or other punctuation in the path name creates an error when trying to upload documents. To eliminate this error, do not use punctuation in path names when saving documents. Examples of acceptable path names are:

- "Smith v Jones.doc"
- "Smith vs Jones.doc"
- "SmithvJones.doc"

Making this small change to standard practices will improve the eFiling experience. This tip and many others are presented at free monthly eFiling demonstrations offered by the Clerk's Office in downtown Phoenix. A list of training dates is posted at <http://clerkofcourt.maricopa.gov/news/eFileTrainingFlier.pdf>