

## **E-Filing Information**

The Santa Rosa County Clerk's office accepts documents through the eFiling Portal for the following case types:

- Circuit Criminal (CF, FJ)
- County Criminal (MM, MO, CO)
- Criminal Traffic (CT)
- Civil Traffic (TR)
- Circuit Civil (CA)
- County Civil-Small Claims (CC, SC)
- Family Law-Domestic Relations (DR)
- Probate (CP, GA)
- Juvenile Delinquency and Dependency (CJ, DP)

## **Quick Links**

[eFiling Portal Login Screen](#)

[The Florida Courts eFiling Portal YouTube Video](#)

[eFiling User Documentation, June 2011](#)

[Florida Supreme Court Standards for Electronic Access to the Courts](#)

[FL Courts Technology Commission](#)

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Q: What is the ePortal?**

The ePortal is a web site that provides eFiling and eRecording capability to users with a single statewide login. Users may utilize the ePortal web interface to submit documents to Clerks and Recorders. The ePortal also supports automated interfaces with other submitter systems. The ePortal supports transmissions to/from the local case/recording systems using national XML standards. The ePortal also provides electronic notifications and service on behalf of filers.

### **Q: Do I need to send in the original document?**

*Criminal Cases:* Effective April 1, 2012, the paper follow-up is not required.

*Civil Cases:* Effective May 30, 2012, the paper follow-up is not required except for those documents mentioned in [AOSC 09-30](#) "Original documents (Death Certificates, etc.) or those that contain original signatures such as affidavits, deeds, mortgages, and wills must be filed manually until the court has determined the digital format by which these issues are addressed."

For cases with required original filings only please place and insert *ef* \_\_\_\_\_ in the top right hand corner of the document and indicate that it has been electronically filed.

Examples of efiled documents that are authorized by the Supreme Court to be followed up with the original to the clerk's office are death and birth certificates, original notes and mortgages, and wills.

**Q: What format should my case number be in?**

In order to search and find a case your case number must be in the following format.

- 2 digit year (08, 09, 10, 11, etc..)
- 6 digit case sequence (000333, 005555)
- 2 character case type (CF, FJ, MM, MO, CO, CT, TR, CP, GA, CA)
- 2 digit location (MX)
- 2 digit co-defendant code (AX)

Case number examples: 09000123CFMXAX, 10000456CAMXAX

**Q: How will users of the ePortal be authenticated?**

Individual Florida Bar members will register to use this system and receive authentication credentials (login ID, password) upon validation of their online registration. Upon receipt of the completed Online Electronic Filing Registration, the system will verify that the attorney is admitted to practice and in good standing with The Florida Bar. A combination including but not limited to name, e-mail and Florida Bar Number, obtained during registration, will be validated against an electronic list provided by the Florida Bar. The attorney will be able to designate their user name and password. Email notification will be sent to the attorney at their identified e-mail account reflecting either approval or denial of the account. The selected user name and password will enable the attorney to retrieve and file documents electronically and to receive the Notice of Electronic Filing. The person to whom the user name and password is assigned is responsible for any documents filed using that user name and password. Each local Clerk's office may opt to participate in the authentication of the user accounts if they choose to do so.

**Q: Is special software required?**

No, the only requirement will be an internet connection and a browser.

**Q: What document types does the ePortal support?**

The ePortal will accept filings in Word or PDF formats. All documents will be converted to PDF formats by the ePortal. By default, the ePortal will provide the PDF format to the local record system. Each county will also have the option to receive the original Word document if available. The ePortal can also provide the conversion to tiff upon request if the local DMS cannot.

Word-Perfect files are not accepted at this time. However, Word-Perfect files can be converted easily into PDF documents without printing and scanning.

**Q: Are all types of documents accepted?**

Certain types of documents (wills, etc) will still require a paper filing for the time being.

**Q: Will there be any charges for users of the ePortal?**

Yes. The regular filings established by Florida law are required to be paid to file cases with Florida's courts. In addition to the filing fees, there are also convenience fees established to offset the use of electronic funds transfer, whether using a credit, charge or debit card, or an ACH transaction. The portal accepts MasterCard, Discover and American Express cards at a rate of 3 percent. The fee for an ACH transaction is a \$3.00 flat fee.

**Q: What electronic notifications will be supported by the ePortal?**

The ePortal will support the following electronic notifications:

- Receipt of subscriber application
- Acceptance/activation of subscriber account
- Change of subscriber profile including login credentials
- Receipt of filing including filing id number
- Acceptance of filing including filing id number and case identification data
- Rejection of filing including filing id number, case identification data and rejection reason

**Q: How will the ePortal store the filing time and time stamping of filings?**

All dates and times, including when the filing is received at the ePortal and accepted/rejected by the clerk, are stored in the ePortal database to ensure the accuracy and consistency of when the event took place. An electronic filing may be submitted to the portal at any time of the day or night, twenty four (24) hours a day, seven days a week. For purposes of determining timeliness, an accepted filing shall be deemed filed on the date and time when the electronic filing is received at the ePortal.

**Q: How will the ePortal provide access to filings once they are accepted by the local Clerk/Recorder?**

The ePortal provides access to filings “in progress” only. Once the filing is accepted and filed in the local CMS/DMS, this becomes the official court record just like the current paper process. Original filings are retained at the portal for a brief period and then removed. Permanent access to these documents will be provided through existing methods – local web sites and CCIS links.

Per AOSC04-04, filers will only be able to access cases of which they are a party of record. This access will be provided through a secured link to the existing CCIS database and links. When a county implements ICD Version 2.00 of CCIS, the Bar ID will be linked to each case in CCIS. When an attorney of record registers on the Portal with their Bar ID, they will be able to see any case linked to their Bar ID via a secured link to the existing CCIS database.

**Q: What happens if a filing occurs on the ePortal and the local system is down?**

If the local record keeping system is down or otherwise not available, then any process that depends on the availability of the local record keeping system will not be available. Filings that are ‘waiting to be filed’ will continue to wait and the re-try mechanism will continue to re-try. Once the local record keeping system is back up, the filings are filed and notifications are sent.

**Q: Why does my filing division for the county not show in the dropdown list for filing?**

Each County determines the Divisions participating in e-Filing. Not all divisions in a county may initially participate in e-filing. As a county brings up a new division it will be listed in the dropdown for the county.

**Q: Why does my document type not show in the dropdown list for filing?**

Each County determines the documents they will accept via e-Filing. As a county accepts a new document type it will be listed in the dropdown for the county. Contact the county in which you are filing regarding your document type.

**Q: Why is the existing case information not displaying? I have verified the case number.**

Existing case information is displayed if the county’s case management system is linked to the ePortal for case retrieval. Not all counties have or will initiate this link. If the link is not active the existing case information will not be displayed.

Case information on a case having the privacy level of Confidential or higher will not be retrieved from CCIS and may not be retrieved from the county case management system.

**Q: Describe if and how electronic signatures will be utilized.**

The ePortal system operates in accordance with the Supreme Courts' Administrative Order (AO09-30) for the use of "/s" in lieu of electronic signatures. A pleading or other document is not required to bear the electronic image of the handwritten signature or an encrypted signature of the attorney, but may be signed in the following manner when electronically filed through an attorney's login and password:

s/ John Doe  
John Doe (e-mail address)  
Bar Number 12345  
Attorney for (Plaintiff/Defendant) XYZ Company  
ABC Law Firm  
123 South Street  
Orlando, FL 32800  
Telephone: (407) 123-4567

**Q: I received an email that my registration was pending approval. Who can assist me in getting my account activated?**

Contact support@flclerks.com - an administrator can activate an ePortal registration.

**Q: I received an email that my filing was rejected. Who can assist me?**

Filing rejection emails are sent out by the county to which the filing was submitted. Contact the county clerk's office for more information regarding your filing.

**Q: What about privacy and the "minimization" rule?**

All filers must comply with the privacy/confidentiality provisions of Florida Rules of Judicial Administration 2.420, and the prevention of unauthorized filings (minimization) provisions of Rule 2.425. These requirements apply to all documents, including attachments. If a filer who electronically files a document containing information identified as exempt from public access pursuant to Rules 2.420 and 2.425, Florida Rules of Judicial Administration, the filer shall indicate that the document contains confidential or sensitive information. Documents that are exempt or claimed to be exempt from public access shall be processed pursuant to Rules 2.420 and 2.425. The filer will be required to certify that either

- a. the filing transmitted through the portal, including all attachments, contains no confidential or sensitive information; or
- b. the filing transmitted through the portal, including all attachments, contains confidential or sensitive information and the filing has been properly protected by complying with the provisions of Rules 2.420 and 2.425, Florida Rules of Judicial Administration.

**Q: How will the ePortal be integrated with local record keeping systems?**

The ePortal is capable of interfacing with other electronic filing service provider systems through the use of Secured Web Services. This functionality allows for system to system interaction with existing and new systems. The ePortal is capable of sending and receiving standard pre-packaged transactions in accordance with current XML standards known as the Electronic Court Filing (ECF) Version 4.0. This standard utilizes other existing XML standards such as National Information Exchange Model (NIEM) and Oasis Legal XML. This standard allows for interfaces with providers and large law firms with the capability of ECF 4.0 XML compliant output. The ePortal provides a common entry point for court electronic filings in the State of Florida and has been developed in compliance with eFiling rules as set forth in Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.525 as well as standards set forth by the Supreme Court's eFiling Committee and subsequently approved by the Supreme Court in AO 09-30. The ePortal's electronic filing implementation is based on implementation of each Major Design Element (MDE) as defined in "Oasis LegalXML Electronic Court Filing Specification Version 4.0 (ECF 4.0 Specification)". The ePortal provides the Filing Assembly, Filing Review and Service MDE's. The Courts Record MDE is implemented by each Clerk-specific Case Maintenance System application. The Courts Record MDE provides the primary interface to integrate the ePortal eFiling transactions with the official case record of the court (i.e. Clerk's Case Maintenance System). The ePortal uses an adapter pattern to interface with Court Record MDE operations. Interfaces specific to a county case maintenance systems are loaded dynamically at runtime. Components implementing the "Court Record MDE operations" are deployed into the same networking environment as underlying CMS and must be accessible over a public network or via a proxy accessible over a public network. Application Adaptors may be necessary for Court Record MDE implementations that are not complaint with ECF 4.0 specifications.

**Q: What steps do we need to take to begin?**

1. Read the eFiling user documentation, located in the "Quick Links" section of this webpage, and follow the instructions there for obtaining a username and password.

eFiling User Documentation, June 2011

2. You are free to begin the eFile process for Santa Rosa County through the ePortal at this time.
3. Call the Courts IT with any questions. Contacts are listed below.

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Email: cottona@flcjn.net

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***Additional Resources:***

[Florida Courts eFiling Portal](#)

[Florida Supreme Court](#)

[Florida State Courts](#)

[The Florida Bar](#)

[Florida Association of Court Clerks](#)

[My Florida Clerks](#)