



E-Filing Fact Sheet

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E-filing is the ability for a court partner agency to submit information to the court, resulting in the update of a court application. Data elements that are contained in a partner's computer system are packaged in XML format and sent electronically to create data in MNCIS Odyssey. The State Court Integration Broker (IB) is the intermediary in the process of e-filing. Successful e-filing is a collaborative effort between local court administration, court business partners, and state court technology resources.

HOW DOES E-FILING WORK?

E-filing works through the use of Extensible Markup Language (XML). The primary purpose of XML is to facilitate the sharing of data across different information systems. Agencies who choose to submit e-files are actually submitting XML packets of data, which are then sent to a receiving computer program such as MNCIS Odyssey. This is referred to as e-filing.

The Integration Broker (IB) at the state court sits between the submitting system and MNCIS Odyssey, and does the work of transforming the submitted XML into the type of XML that Odyssey can consume. The standard for sending XML to the courts is referred to as Minnesota Court XML (CourtXML). The CourtXML e-filing schemas provide the standards for submitting agencies as to how they need to format their XML in order to communicate with the State Courts and Odyssey.

WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF E-FILING?

E-Complaints:

The electronic submission of a criminal complaint to the courts is an example of e-filing. The e-filing process for an e-complaint begins with a prosecutor's system providing criminal complaint information in CourtXML format in an electronic file. The file is then submitted through the courts' IB where the completeness of the electronic file is evaluated. If any of the required data elements are missing, the IB returns a rejection message to the submitting system.

The prosecutor also prints out the complaint that goes to the court for signing by the judge for probable cause unless they are using the BCA eCharging Service. Through the eCharging Service a complaint can be electronically submitted to the judge for signature. (In some prosecutor systems, a paper complaint can be printed directly from the case management system.) When all signatures are obtained, the complaint is submitted to the court and is used to facilitate processing of the electronic file.

UCP #171 identifies data elements that prosecutors are requested to provide to courts as part of the Criminal Complaint, as well as data elements that are part of the Defendant Fact Sheet (data important to courts and state agencies). Information on UCP #171 can be located as follows: <http://www.mncourts.gov/?page=1775>

Other e-filings that are handled in a similar manner to e-filing of complaints are e-filing of tab charges and individual citations.

Batch Citations:

The electronic submission of batch citations to the courts is another example of e-filing. Batch citation filing is the ability of law enforcement agencies to file citations with the court in an electronic batch format. Successful batch citation filing is a collaborative effort that involves the participation of court administration, one or more law enforcement agencies, and a vendor with a product that can convert data into the CourtXML Citation schema format. For batch citations, there is the opportunity to eliminate the paper citation because the e-filing of batch citations includes the creation of an e-file facsimile of the citation in Odyssey.

Submitters may submit citation batches at any time, but they are processed on a pre-determined schedule for operational efficiency. (At this time 'by-passing' the queue is not an option we allow anyone to do.)

Other E-File Types:

In addition to e-files that initiate criminal cases in MNCIS, other e-file types are available for authorized partner agencies to make specific updates to existing MNCIS cases. Court administrators can determine which e-file types they want to allow from business partners.

| Criminal Case Initiation Services | Description |
|--|--|
| Citations: Batch Citations (Adult and Juvenile) | See the Batch Citations explanation, above. |
| Citations: Single Citations (Adult and Juvenile) | Used when a system needs to submit a single citation. A single citation may be sent (versus a batch of citations) from a violations bureau computer system, such as VIBES, because the individual citation requires a court hearing. |

| Criminal Case Initiation Services <i>(continued)</i> | Description |
|---|--|
| Complaints | See the E-Complaints explanation on Page 1. |
| Tab Charges | Used when an agency, such as a law enforcement agency, initiates a case with gross misdemeanor charges by tab charge. This is a case initiation type used by the Hennepin County Jail. |

| Case Update Services | Description |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Case Cross Reference | Allows a court partner agency to add a case identifier from an external system to the case in MNCIS; for example, a prosecutor file number may be added to a MNCIS case, as a case cross reference number, using this service. |
| Agency Note To File | Allows a court partner agency to add an informational note to a MNCIS case, using the comment field of a specially configured case event. |
| Attorney Assignment | Allows a court partner agency to add or remove an attorney for the plaintiff or defendant party on a case. |
| Biometric Collection Status | Allows a court partner agency to add or remove the following flags on a case: 'Fingerprints needed' or 'Fingerprints taken.' |
| Case Detention Status | Allows a court partner agency to submit a detention status for a defendant on a specific court case. For example, a jail could use this service to inform the court that a criminal defendant on a specific case has posted bond and been released. |
| Hearing E-File | Allows a court partner agency to schedule, reset or cancel a hearing for a case, on select calendars. |
| Initial Release Conditions | Allows a court partner agency to specify the initial conditions of release for a defendant. |
| Interpreter Status | Allows a court partner agency to indicate if an interpreter is needed on a case, and to specify the language that is needed. |
| Professional Party Assignment | Allows a court partner agency to add or remove certain types of professional parties, such as probation officers, on a case. |
| Warrant Status | Allows a court partner agency to update the status of a warrant to indicate that the warrant has been cleared by arrest. |
| Party Update Services | Description |
| Other Agency ID | Allows a court partner agency to add an identifier to a MNCIS party. |

WHAT IS THE BENEFIT OF E-FILING FOR COURT ADMINISTRATION?

- Eliminates the tedious data entry tasks associated with filing. Saves on human resources because data is entered only once.
- Improves consistency and accuracy by reducing human error because data is entered directly into the case management system.
- Eliminates cost, storage, and handling of paper.
- Speeds the exchange of data between organizations.
- Allows for better service to the public and effective use of taxpayer funds.

WHAT DOES E-FILING NOT OFFER?

- It is not entirely paperless. Although the paper flow is diminished greatly, there is still some paper flow.

WHAT DOES COURT ADMINISTRATION NEED TO DO?

Court administrators have the choice to participate in e-filing. If your court wants to begin e-filing now, see below.

The First Step

The first step for any e-filing project is to contact your county attorney, law enforcement agency/s, or other court business partners to assess interest and ability of their systems to e-file to the court. Direct your partners, and their vendors, to the Courts Integration Services website for technical information on how to work with the courts on e-filing projects. Contact the Courts Integration Team in the Information Technology Divisions at SCAO for assistance with your e-filing project.

Information on E-Filing

For more information on E-Filing see: <http://www.mncourts.gov/is>.