

## **E-File and Serve Project Update**

There have been many new project developments since the last update on the Fourth Judicial District's electronic filing (i.e., e-Filing) project (March 5, 2010). A working group has been established and is busily addressing a number of programmatic issues associated with the development and roll-out of Odyssey's new e-File and Serve applications module. As many of you are aware, the Court's Civil Division was chosen as the first court unit to implement e-File and Serve. To carefully monitor the impact of this new system, a pilot project plan is under review and will serve as the initial catalyst to test the electronic case file management system and transform current Court business practices from paper-centric to digital. The e-File Pilot project phase will include six law firms that have volunteered to participate in testing the e-filing application and procedures designed to stimulate the Fourth Judicial District's movement toward a paper on demand court system.

### **Significant Project Events**

The Fourth Judicial District has entered into an agreement with Tyler Technologies, Minnesota State Court's current business support and development partner for the Odyssey/MNCIS case management system, to facilitate the enhancement and implementation of its e-Filing and service business application. In preparation for this significant change in Court business practices, a myriad of underlying policies, practices and rules have been or will be examined and modified to pave the way for this innovative shift to digital submission of case filings, electronic document approval, and warehousing of e-filed documents in MNCIS for electronic storage and retrieval.

Under the leadership and guidance of Assistant Chief Judge Peter Cahill, Civil Presiding Judge Robert Blaeser, Deputy Court Administrator Michael Kelley, and Senior Court Manager Anna Lamb, a project working group consisting of Fourth and Second Judicial District staff, Minnesota State Court Administration Office representatives, and Tyler Technologies personnel was assembled to begin the highly challenging and complex task of analyzing the intricacies of the Civil Division's varied business functions. The e-Filing Working Group completed a "fit assessment" process designed to analyze in exacting detail the complexity of individual business transactions currently conducted by the Civil Division.

Tyler Technologies is currently refining and designing the e-File application to electronically transform our current Civil Division processes into a digital environment. As we approach the Go Live Date for the e-Filing pilot project, literally hundreds of detail business issues have been or will be analyzed, discussed, vetted and finalized to provide an application blueprint for our business consultants to follow in developing the e-File and Serve program. This includes an "e-Clerk's tool" for internal review and processing of e-filed case documents and seamless integration with Odyssey for the uploading of processed e-filed documents as searchable attachments to MNCIS case files.

All of these business functions will ultimately be converted into user interface screens with functionality that mirrors our current paper-oriented business practices. Each element will then be evaluated during the upcoming pilot phase of the e-File project scheduled to begin on October 18, 2010.

Once the pilot phase is completed, the Civil Division will continue a transition to a digital, paper on demand Court environment for all related judicial processes and case file transactions. Our work, however, will continue as we begin the process of moving the Court's other business lines to e-Filing in phases over the course of the next 18 months. Access to the e-File and Serve application will be available using a web-based client-portal interface where any stakeholder can sign on to the system, register their business and payment information and initiate case filings electronically. Streamlining the process for case filings to a more efficient and innovative use of digital technology is predicted to significantly reduce the administrative burden of managing millions of pieces of paper, substantially eliminate paper storage needs, improve accountability in case filings, and provide stakeholders with a more transparent and manageable case filing system.

To proactively respond to the growing interest in the e-Filing project, the Fourth Judicial District is hosting a number of e-Filing Demonstration Sessions to promote and educate stakeholders on the many unique facets of how e-filing will affect the Civil Division and, consequently, their business interactions. E-Filing demonstration sessions have been scheduled throughout August and September, and the Court has invited stakeholders throughout the Fourth and Second Judicial District, as well as the Minnesota Judicial Branch.

For additional project information, please contact Nancy Peters, Communications Specialist, Anna Lamb, Senior Manager, Civil Court Division, or John Erar, Chief Information Officer for the Fourth Judicial District.