

Florida ePortal and eFiling

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

ePortal Users FAQs

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: 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, Word Perfect, 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.

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: 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 compliant with ECF 4.0 specifications.

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

Your local clerk will provide you with assistance regarding how to log in and use the portal when the portal becomes fully operational.

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