



## CUYAHOGA COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS DIVISION OF DOMESTIC RELATIONS

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 17, 2017

### ***Optional E-filing available in Cuyahoga County Domestic Relations Court***

CLEVELAND – The Domestic Relations Division of the Common Pleas Court announces the commencement of e-filing for all domestic relations cases beginning April 17, 2017. Attorneys may now electronically file all new domestic relations cases, except domestic violence, beginning April 17, 2017. Other filings in existing cases such as affidavits, briefs, motions, will also be accepted. Self-represented parties may participate in the e-filing program but will not be required to do so.

“This is a major step forward in the Court’s efforts to provide access to justice and make our system more convenient. By investing in technology, we expect increased efficiencies and tremendous cost-savings to taxpayers,” said Administrative Judge Rosemary Grdina Gold. “The time saved from improved processes will allow us to focus on better serving the needs of our customers.”

The e-filing system will allow court documents that are filed electronically to be integrated into the Court’s electronic case management system. Until now, business processes required Clerk of Courts’ staff to scan and index paper documents into the official records of the court and Domestic Relations Court staff to enter case data into the Court’s case management system, manually. Now, with e-filing, once documents are accepted, they can be imported into the case management system and docket entries notated instantaneously. The Court and the Clerk of Courts process almost 100,000 paper filings and over 700,000 pages a year. The expanded e-filing platform will allow the processing of documents in a fraction of the time currently spent processing paper in the traditional manner.

Some of the advantages of converting to an electronic, paper-on-demand environment include:

- E-filing allows attorneys and parties to file and access documents electronically via the Internet, 365 days a year, seven days a week, 24 hours a day.
- Electronic documents can be filed from anywhere in the world with basic computer equipment.

- Multiple users can view documents at the same time.
- E-filing is environmentally friendly by greatly diminishing the enormous amount of paper that must be physically maintained and stored by the Court and reducing gasoline and carbon emissions associated with trips to the courthouse.
- E-filing provides a more secure environment for court information through encryption and by eliminating paper documents.
- Postings appear on the docket within minutes of document acceptance.
- E-filing enables “e-service,” allowing attorneys to serve opposing counsel electronically where rules permit.

There are no additional costs to e-file – users will pay the same filing fees charged for filing paper documents. “We are proud that we were able to accomplish this without any extra charges,” Gold said.

A top priority is to have implementation proceed as smoothly as possible. “One of my priorities when I became Administrative Judge was to put e-filing on the fast track, and my staff and I have devoted much effort to learning where the problems lie – for us and for users – from our pilot project for limited case types that began in 2016. We are pleased that the pilot went so well and we are now able to expand it to the hundreds of domestic relations cases filed in our Court each year.”

The Court has adopted an Administrative Order regarding the particulars of e-filing. A video tutorial to familiarize users with the process will be available on the Clerk of Courts website at <http://coc.cuyahogacounty.us/>. Clerk staff can also provide hands-on assistance at its Help Desk on the first floor of the Justice Center. A workstation equipped with a computer and scanner is available for attorneys to e-file in the Clerk of Court’s satellite office in the Cuyahoga County Courthouse.

See the Court’s E-Filing Administrative Order at <http://domestic.cuyahogacounty.us/en-US/E-Filing.aspx> available on the home page of the Court's website under “E-Filing.”