

Resolution 13

The Emergence of E-Everything

WHEREAS, the Conference of Chief Justices recognizes that the public has embraced the Internet and other advanced technologies, which has increased the demand on government organizations for technology-based services; and

WHEREAS, the Conference understands that technology has enlarged the scope of the judiciary's responsibility to preserve the American tradition of open courts; and

WHEREAS, the Conference further recognizes that state courts have the opportunity to enhance the public's ability to observe and participate in the judicial process through these technologies; and

WHEREAS, a White Paper, The Emergence of E-Everything, comprehensively examined the issues surrounding the electronic access revolution in the state courts; and

WHEREAS, the White Paper identifies two fundamental principles related to electronic access to the courts: (1) that electronic access should be free or inexpensive; and (2) that with regard for reasonable privacy concerns, court information and services should be open, accessible and convenient through the use of electronic access technology; and

WHEREAS, the White Paper further examines best practices for providing the public with electronic access to the state courts and identifies additional technology policies that need to be addressed by the state court community; and

WHEREAS, the White Paper provides an overall policy framework within which each state court system may establish electronic access policies and identifies fundamental first steps to be considered by states as they develop their own individual state court action plans:

- Develop an integrated statewide court website that is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act;
- Incorporate the oversight of website management under the state court administrator, including protocols to update the court website;
- Appoint a committee of attorneys and court users to review website and E-offerings;
- Provide free website access to all court calendars;
- Develop protocols to ensure free or reasonably priced electronic access to court decisions and other court documents;
- Pilot e-filing (giving consideration to the role of the vendors);
- Consider the adoption of national e-filing data standards;
- Provide on-line payment of fees and fines;
- Conduct video conferencing experiments;
- Construct a mobile E-courtroom for use throughout the courthouse; and
- Offer Internet access to court users in targeted areas of the courthouses;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Conference of Chief Justices hereby agrees to establish the following national action plan:

- The Conference of Chief Justices encourages the development of national functional and data standards for automated state court systems and encourages each state to comply with the standards as they develop and to enhance their own automated systems;

- Each state should establish a process and a governing body to create and modify policy on electronic access issues;
- Each state should establish a strategic plan to guide implementation of electronic access initiatives;
- The National Center for State Courts should periodically conduct a national survey of existing state court policies and strategies on implementing electronic access to state court systems; and
- The National Center for State Courts should convene a summit to discuss the results of the national survey and to explore methods of fostering implementation of state court electronic access initiatives.

Adopted as proposed by the Board of Directors at the 29th Midyear Meeting on January 18, 2006.