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2/18/2022

Honorable Karen E. Rushing  
Chair, Florida E-filing Authority Board of Directors  
P.O. Boc 16428  
Tallahassee, FL 32317

Dear Honorable Karen E. Rushing:

For over 10 years, the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal has provided a statewide portal for filers; including attorneys, their legal assistants, agencies, and self-represented litigants; to electronically submit documents to cases in any trial or appellate court in the state and serve documents to other parties. Filers have the choice of submitting directly through the Portal or using any certified Third-Party Vendor (TPV) who typically provide value-added services to the filer. Examples of value-added services TPVs provide to attorneys and their legal assistants include service of process, monthly billing, and the integration of e-filing systems, including the Florida Portal, with the attorney's practice management system.

After submitting, filers and the other parties on the service list receive two emails from the Portal:

1. Immediately after submission, confirmation that the filing was received with the documents as submitted attached with the addition of a simple stamp indicating the date and time submitted on each document, and
2. After review by the clerk and/or court, a notification of whether the filing was accepted into the court record or rejected.

If the filing was submitted using a TPV, the Portal also transmits two web service messages to the TPV:

1. Immediately after submission, an acknowledgement message
2. After acceptance or rejection, a Notice of Filing Review Complete (NFRC) message

Unlike e-Filing systems in other states, neither 1. the email from the Portal notifying acceptance or rejection of each filing nor 2. the NFRC message currently includes the court documents - that is, the documents as accepted into the court record, including any modifications by the clerk and the addition of the clerk's seal.

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The ability to retrieve court documents is still required by the attorney for several reasons, including the service of process and for synchronization with their practice management systems. In some Florida courts, the clerk will email certain accepted documents (e.g., a summons packet) to the filer. In other courts, the attorney or their assistant needs to go to the court to receive a physical copy of these documents.

Alternatively, after a delay of up to 24 hours, attorneys may use the "MyCase" features of the Portal to retrieve court documents from the Comprehensive Case Information System (CCIS). Access by an attorney to documents in CCIS is currently limited to cases and documents in which:

1. They are an attorney of record in the case,
2. They have previously submitted a filing in the case and
3. They are not otherwise prohibited from access by the [Access Security Matrix](#).

For instance, to access court documents from CCIS on behalf of an attorney, a legal assistant must currently access the Portal using the attorney's credentials.

On behalf of the TPVs we represent and the attorneys and legal assistants we serve, we respectfully request that the E-filing Authority prioritize including the return of court documents to the attorneys and TPVs statewide in a future release of the Portal.

Two options available to the Authority for returning court documents include:

1. Enhancing the Portal to include documents in responses to Parties and TPVs, and/or
2. Integration of the Portal and CCIS to allow parties and TPVs to retrieve documents they eFile from CCIS.

We would also appreciate the opportunity to present this request at an upcoming meeting of the E-filing Authority Board. We have attached a set of slides that we would use in this presentation, if they are appropriate and acceptable to the chair.

Thank you for your consideration. Please let us know if there is anything else we can do to better support the Florida courts and attorneys.

Honorable Karen E. Rushing

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Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

*Ed Watts*

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Ed Watts, CEO

InfoTrack US, Inc.

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*Dario Diaz*

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CC: Beth Allman