

COTS FY 2009 HIGHLIGHTS



Progress in implementation of the Judicial Branch's new integrated case management system, Contexte, continued over the past year with the successful completion of phase 4a, which consisted of implementation of the civil system in the Court of Common Pleas in Kent and New Castle Counties. (The Contexte system was implemented in the Sussex County Court of Common Pleas and the Sussex County Superior Court at the end of fiscal year 2008.) The new system provided important benefits to both filers and the courts.

Along with COTS, the eFlex system for e-filing civil cases was established in the Justice of the Peace Court and Court of Common Pleas. E-filing was implemented concurrently with the implementation of the Contexte system in the Court of Common Pleas in November 2008. In the Justice of the Peace Court, as well as the Court of Common Pleas, e-filing became mandatory for attorneys in November 2008 and for certain other multiple filers and for State agencies on December 1, 2008. New users receive assistance in learning how to e-file through training sessions conducted on a regular basis and a help desk which is available to answer questions arising during filing.

The new e-filing system provides important benefits to both filers and courts. Users appreciate the savings in time from being able to file electronically and to pay their filing fees by credit card or by setting up a Court Debit Account. The eFlex system also benefits the courts by enhancing case processing efficiencies through reduction of data entry and dependence on paper files.

The coming year will bring implementation of Contexte in the Superior Court in Kent and New Castle Counties. This will provide important time savings to the Court because Contexte will download information from the Court's e-filing system, thus saving data entry time.

Other new features associated with COTS include access to civil case information remotely through CourtConnect. This enhanced public access, recently approved by the Judiciary, will be implemented in FY 2010 and will allow internet access to general information about the progress of civil cases in the Justice of the Peace Court, the Court of Common Pleas and the Superior Court.