



Electronic Court Records (ECR)



ECR Connectivity Services Protocol: An Agreement between the King County Department of Judicial Administration and the Superior Court

I. Accessing Court Files as Electronic Images

- A. The Department of Judicial Administration (DJA), through the Electronic Court Records (ECR) system, will provide a PC intranet (web-based) program to be used for viewing Superior Court case document images by the Superior Court's staff at work locations within the King County Wide Area Network (WAN). Cases filed on or after January 3, 2000 and imaged archived cases will be available to them to view on PCs. They will not have to obtain the hard copy from the Clerk's Office to view those records.
- B. ECR access will be available daily except during pre-scheduled backups and required maintenance, which happen at night and on weekends except in emergencies. ECR will be available between the hours of 5:30 a.m. and 10:30 p.m.; this allows for routine daily security backups in the ECR system.
- C. DJA will maintain and provide the Superior Court's Office with paper documents and files for active imaged cases until the Superior Court has achieved ECR connectivity.
 1. Connectivity is achieved when staff are able to do their work that now requires access to case documents by obtaining the documents as images through ECR; that is, retrieving the hard copy files from the Clerk's Office will not be necessary to accomplish this work.
 2. The achievement of connectivity for the Superior Court will be indicated by requests to DJA for hard copy files declining toward zero, as file users master ECR. DJA will help the Superior Court to help its users to achieve this mastery.
 3. Connectivity also means that ECR will be shown to be a stable and reliable system based on its performance. DJA will carefully observe the effects of added users and other factors and adjust or upgrade system components to ensure ongoing performance reliability and availability of records.
- D. There will be a phase-in period, so file users will be able to adjust to using images in their work with Court files. They will have the time needed to become competent and confident with using ECR.

- E. After connectivity is achieved, DJA will begin to transition away from hard copy file systems for imaged records. Paper files and documents for imaged cases will no longer be available from DJA after _____ (date to be set by agreement).
- F. The Superior Court will continue to present paper documents when filing matters with the Clerk.
- G. The Superior Court agrees to support the use of ECR images by its staff.

II. User Training

- A. DJA will ensure user training is provided for ECR users. DJA will train designated persons from the Superior Court's office who will in turn pass on the training to others.
- B. DJA will provide users with on-line Help screens.
- C. DJA will provide users with written ECR help materials.
- D. DJA will update its Help and other written support materials as new situations are encountered.
- E. DJA will provide users with troubleshooting guidance, including detailed instruction on what to do when there seems to be a problem with ECR.
- F. DJA will provide training in ECR security procedures for those who have been granted access to sealed records.
- G. The Superior Court will ensure that its case file/document users, including temporary staff, will be available to receive ECR training sponsored by DJA, *i.e.*, provided by persons trained by DJA using DJA sponsored training materials.
- H. The Superior Court will encourage ECR users to check the on-line Help screens and written training/troubleshooting materials.
- I. The Superior Court will regularly remind users who have authorization for sealed record access of required ECR security measures.

III. ECR System and User Support

- A. DJA's ECR system is designed to maximize the security and reliability of electronic records, as both a safeguard for the Superior Court's case records and a system to provide ready access to those records.
- B. DJA will maintain ongoing reliable operation of the ECR system to ensure against service interruptions. Server hardware and software are monitored and updated regularly to ensure their reliability. Necessary service is performed as needed, but this generally occurs during nights or weekends to avoid causing problems for the ECR users. During normal business hours, ECR is observed by trained technical staff from DJA to guard against unanticipated or unscheduled system problems. DJA maintains strong around-the-clock support contracts with the vendors whose components are vital parts of the ECR system. DJA also maintains offsite duplicate optical disks so that any images or disks that may have flaws or problems can be replaced or restored.

- C. DJA will provide and maintain an ECR telephone “Status Line.” This telephone line will be available to any user to report problems, get information on how to use ECR, or get information about system status. The telephone “Status Line” will always have recorded information on ECR system status. In case of a system down situation, the telephone line will indicate the expected system restoration time. The phone options will be:
1. An option for a person to *report a technical problem with the ECR software*¹ will connect the caller with a technical staff person or with a voice mail slot for recording the report.
 2. An option to *speak to a person for a training-related purpose* will link a caller with a DJA contact person who will take the call if during regular business hours; after hours, a recorded voice message can be left for DJA attention the next business day.
 3. An option will connect the caller with recorded help information, such as *Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)*.
- D. DJA will maintain an “ECR Support Mailbox” in the electronic mail system (ECR@metrokc.gov). DJA will use this mailbox to notify department contact persons about unscheduled service interruptions, to tell when service has been restored after an outage, and to serve as a single point of contact for electronic mail about ECR. Users will use this mailbox to:
1. report less urgent problems with ECR,
 2. ask questions about using ECR, or
 3. share comments or suggestions about ECR.
- E. How to obtain in-person help when a user needs it will be covered as part of ECR training. Updated information will be maintained in written form, made available to users in hand-outs, via e-mail, and posted on the Clerk’s web site.
- F. ECR technical staff will always be available during County business hours, providing system support for ECR, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except for holidays. Contact with them on urgent technical matters will be through the “Status Line.”
- G. The Superior Court will name ECR Representatives (and back-ups) who will be contact persons with DJA about ECR administration and operations for their assigned areas or sites. DJA will train the ECR Representatives fully in operating the image viewer, including guidance on troubleshooting when problems arise, including using the “Status Line” or “ECR Support Mailbox.”
- H. The Superior Court will post or distribute ECR service or ECR support notices provided to them by DJA.

IV. User Status and Administration

- A. DJA will maintain ECR user access and security.

¹ Problems associated with hardware must be reported to the Superior Court’s own technical staff, not DJA.

- B. DJA will assign users their proper ECR access privileges, including ensuring that access to sealed records is provided only to authorized personnel. Access by others to sealed records will be strictly prohibited.
- C. Users will follow workstation and ECR security requirements, including safeguarding and changing passwords as required. DJA will contact the Superior Court about any reports it receives regarding users who are not observing such important requirements.
- D. The Superior Court will routinely provide DJA with information on new, reassigned, or departed staff who have authorization to view any sealed records, so DJA can maintain user security privileges. Supervisors of new or reassigned staff will sign and submit a standard form to DJA that declares the security privileges required by the staff person for ECR, SCOMIS, JASS, or any other system administered by the Clerk's Office.

V. ECR Software and Equipment

- A. DJA will maintain software licenses required for access to ECR by Superior Court users.
- B. DJA will provide the Superior Court with assistance in the initial technical set-up of ECR software and equipment obtained for Connectivity.
- C. DJA technicians will advise the Superior Court's technical staff on how to troubleshoot ECR-related technical problems.
- D. The Superior Court is responsible for its user equipment and will provide the operating system, browser(s), and workspaces for using ECR to view electronic document images.
- E. The Superior Court will maintain its own network and its connectivity with the County WAN.
- F. The Superior Court's technical staff will remain the contact persons for the Superior Court's users for their computer related and network problems.
- G. The Superior Court will own, maintain, and plan for replacement of all items of technology obtained for it through the ECR Connectivity project. This technology shall become part of the Superior Court's own property inventory.

Superior Court

Department of Judicial Administration

Date

Date