

# Florida Courts



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**Florida Courts**  
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September 17, 2013

Chief Justice Ricky Polston  
Florida Supreme Court  
500 S. Duval St.  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Chief Justice Polston,

The Florida Courts E-Filing Authority Board of Directors (Board) met on September 5, 2013, in an emergency meeting to address the ability of the four main court criminal court system partners: the clerks, the courts, the State Attorneys and the Public Defenders, to file and accept documents filed in criminal cases on October 1, 2013. We realize that there are many others involved but if these four can start operating electronically most of the criminal court system would be fully electronic. These groups have been working on this matter for some time both separately and as a group. The Authority fully agrees with you that it is important to transition to the use of electronic documents in Florida's courts and to do so it is imperative that we have commitment from all partners to make our goal.

Over the week, the Authority has gathered information from each of the four partners and compiled a summarized document which is attached, based on the reports each has provided. In addition to the summarized report, all documentation provided to us is attached.

The attached report provides a snapshot of readiness for the October 1, 2013, deadline for each of the reporting local court system stakeholders; however, the Board felt strongly that there must be a way to monitor progress of implementation after that date and not simply ask for an overall extension. The Board also felt that even if extended there should not be an open-ended new date but rather new attainable deadlines should be set.

During the meeting, and at numerous other meetings, the Board cautioned each of these partner groups that if they have represented to the Board, and to you, through this report, that they will be ready by October 1, 2013, but are not "live" and actually ready to take filings on that date, that each individual office must write a letter to you requesting an exemption. From the portal standpoint the batch interface option is available, but local systems must be configured to send and receive the batch. The Board voted that once the Clerk notified the Authority of their ability to receive batch criminal filing, the State Attorney and Public Defender could begin batch filing on an optional basis. Mandatory e-filing for criminal cases would become mandatory for those local entities 30 days after the

date of the Clerk's notification to the board. No local entity can defer this activity later than February 1, 2014.

The Board will post on the Authority's website an updated list each time a clerk's office comes online.

Additionally, the Board would ask that the documents initiating criminal cases to continue to be delivered in a paper form to the Clerk of the Court or sent through their existing local systems as referenced in AOSC 13-12.

I appreciate your efforts in e-filing in Florida and appreciate all the support you have provided to the Florida Courts E-Filing Authority. I hope you would contact me if there are any questions on this report that I have provided on behalf of the Florida Courts E-Filing Authority.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "T".

Tim Smith, Florida Courts E-Filing Authority Chair  
Putnam County Clerk of the Circuit Court