



2014 Update From the Chief Justice



This year promises to be an exciting and challenging time for the Oregon eCourt Program.

Our implementation process has been proven in 10 circuit courts, and we will be adding nine more to the Oregon eCourt community this year – including two of our largest trial courts. We also have expanded eFiling and ePayment services to increase user convenience, and are starting a gradual roll-out of remote access to documents in circuit court cases – an exciting and long-awaited service to the court community.

In less than two years, we have gone from testing this new system in our first pilot court to a fast-paced production schedule, with new court go-lives every few months, and a growing array of online services to help people access the courts. With each new court we've added, we have (as one would hope) fewer problems and they've been resolved more quickly. Through after-action reports, we've learned what we've done right and what we need to change in terms of training, go-live logistics, and after-support – as a result, we've improved our go-live process dramatically.

By mid-2014, we will be half-way through our implementation schedule. Rounding second and coming safely into home will be a big lift, but we've been preparing for it for more than two years now, we have a strong team in place, and while it would be naïve to think that there won't be problems, I am confident that we will have successful transitions to Oregon eCourt in each of the remaining courts.

Oregon eCourt is not just a case management tool – it is an integrated system of eFiling, case management, document access, ePayment, and so on. And we have had substantial recent success in each of those areas. Since our ePayment system went up in October 2011, we have collected more than \$43 million in fines and other payments online – each one saving a stamp or trip to the courthouse, and the time it takes court staff to process those payments. Most appellate court filings these days are eFiled, and we are planning to make appellate eFiling mandatory for lawyers. We now have eFiling services in 10 trial courts and more than 5,700 documents have been eFiled in less than a year. We are providing remote access to court documents to government entities now, with Bar members and other users coming up... And by the end of the year we will start having interactive forms available that can be downloaded and eFiled statewide.

We started publicizing Oregon eCourt more than six years ago as a 24/7 courthouse, where documents could be filed electronically and case records accessed at any time, from any location. In retrospect, it's fair say that we have come to understand and appreciate the complexity of the process to develop and implement Oregon eCourt, and the time and effort involved in a statewide roll-out. But the fact is that the case management system we are moving to has been successfully implemented in 10 of our courts, as well as many others around the country; eFiling is available in 10 courts and increasing; and our roll-out plan is on schedule. By implementing Oregon eCourt slowly, court by court, and by paying our vendor as deliverables are completed, we have avoided some of the problems experienced by other large technology projects.

In the 10 courts that have gone live with Oregon eCourt, staff and judges are enthusiastic about the changes, almost to a person, and eager to embrace the advantages of the new technology. We are on time and on budget, and have received the support and funding to continue Oregon eCourt through the 2013-15 biennium.

Oregon eCourt is making the courts' internal work easier and more efficient, and we are expanding the tools that will apply those benefits to the work of the legal community, public safety agencies, social service agencies, and the public at large. These internal and external improvements will provide better access, better information, and better outcomes for all Oregonians.

— Chief Justice Thomas A. Balmer