

Electronic Filing with the Courts of British Columbia; Progress to Date.

e-file will enable external clients to submit documents electronically for filing with the court. e-file will be available to law firms, registry agents and self represented litigants

e-services

One of the strategic goals of the BC Government is the provision of electronic web-based transactions to facilitate the interaction of the public and businesses with government services and court services. Court Services Online (CSO) is part of an electronic court services project designed to develop web-based services to facilitate interaction with the court registries across our province. The key products of Court Services Online are the electronic civil search service (e-search), the filing assistant, and the electronic filing service (e-filing).

The benefits of the e-filing service will include:

- The ability to file court documents to any court registry in the province from anywhere in the province.
- Improved access to the court registries
- Increased efficiency and timelines of registry services

e-file pilot

The legislative rules to facilitate e-filing came into effect July 1, 2005. The e-file pilot was held in 7 locations throughout the province (see details below) the first location was implemented in October 2005 and continuing through to September/ October 2006.

The e-filing service will allow registered users of Court Services Online to submit electronic court documents to the Civil Supreme and Provincial Court registries. During the pilot phase of e-filing to the Civil Supreme Court and Provincial Court, a number of law firms were identified and volunteered to participate in the pilot. The firms participating in the pilot are able to electronically file to court registries participating in the pilot testing the system and new business processes that have been developed to support e-filing. BC is the first province in Canada to introduce a comprehensive e-filing system that includes the filing service and the storage and maintenance of court files in an electronic format. The systematic approach to the implementation of the service in the initial phase will ensure the efficiency of the system in addition to continuing to meet the dynamic needs of our clients.

Pilot Locations

e-filing was limited to pilot participants at the following pilot sites:

- Kelowna & Vernon Law Courts
 - October 2005
- Abbotsford & Chilliwack Law Courts
 - December 2005
- Victoria Law Courts
 - January 2005
- Prince Rupert Law Courts
 - February 2006
- Vancouver Law Courts
 - June 2006

Scanning Pilot

As of July 1, 2007 all Orders manually submitted to the 7 e-filing locations are being scanned into the electronic case tracking system. After working through the workflow of scanning, initiating documents and pleadings have been added.

The scanning pilot will support several other electronic initiatives and provides improved access to both the court registry and our clients as we continue to build on the vision of an electronic file. As documents are e-filed or scanned they are available online through e-search.

Provincial implementation of scanning will occur during 2008 and additional sites will be added incrementally.

Judicial Module

The Judicial Module of CSO will allow the Supreme Court Judiciary to review and sign e-filed documents electronically. The Judicial Module is currently being piloted by 3 Supreme Court Justices and 1 Supreme Court Master. The pilot will initially be centred in Vancouver. The Judicial Module as a component of Court Services Online will complete the process for receiving, and fully processing a document electronically in the Court Registry.

Provincial Implementation

After a successful pilot, the e-filing component of the Court Services Online (CSO) project is complete and e-filing will be available to the general public at the seven pilot court locations as of June 4th, 2007.

Effective June 4th, 2007 any registered user can e-file to any of the following locations:

- Vancouver (Supreme only)
- Victoria
- Kelowna
- Vernon
- Chilliwack
- Abbotsford
- Prince Rupert

Additional sites will be added incrementally.

In order to e-file, you must have a registered account with CSO or BC Online, accept the User Agreement and have a registered card against the account. For information on how to register, click the **Register** link from the [CSO Home Page](#), under the Services menu.

The service fee to e-file a document is \$7.00 per package. A package can consist of 1 or many documents that all relate to the same court file number.

In order to e-file each account must first accept the User Agreement. If you already have a CSO account, the account manager must accept the new User Agreement on behalf of the account before users in the account can access e-filing. New accounts also must accept the User Agreement in order to access e-filing on the CSO website. E-filing is available for most Supreme Court Civil and Provincial Small Claims documents. For restrictions on which documents can not be filed, refer to [Supreme Court Rule 69 \(5\)](#) and [Small Claims Rule 22](#).

Documents submitted by e-filing must be in PDF format and no bigger than 4MB. Reader enabled electronic forms are available free of charge online through filing or you can access them from the following links; [Supreme Court Forms](#) and [Small Claims Forms](#).

E-filing is a simple process and can take less than 3 minutes to complete. If you would like to see the process of filing to an existing file and creating a new file, watch our two online demos found on the [CSO Home Page](#).

Once you e-file your document, you can retrieve your electronic filed copy of the document via your CSO account.

If you have questions or would like further information on e-filing, please contact our Toll Free Help Desk (within B.C) 1-800-663-6102