



# MICHIGAN COURTS NEWS RELEASE

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## **Supreme Court Makes Proposals to Help Trial Courts Improve Access**

*Seeking public comment on plan to ensure court access for self-represented litigants*

LANSING, MI, February 27, 2019 – With a goal of ensuring access to the courts for self-represented litigants, the Michigan Supreme Court has published for public comment proposed measures to help trial courts implement and mandate e-filing use statewide. If approved, a uniform exemption process would be implemented, and trial courts that seek to mandate e-filing for all filers must submit a plan to the State Court Administrative Office for approval that describes how the court will provide assistance to self-represented litigants.

“Making e-filing mandatory in Michigan trial courts is the best way to ensure that all residents have uniform access to local court services and resources,” said Chief Justice Pro Tem David F. Viviano, who oversees the Supreme Court’s e-filing process. “At the same time, self-represented litigants who might not have access to a computer must have the ability to file pleadings and receive notices from the court. Our goal is to improve access to all while increasing efficiency and saving money.”

The order also would require that there be at least one computer workstation per county for self-represented litigants and that the court conform to the standards set forth by the State Court Administrative Office. Those standards include:

- The court must perform a calculation using a calculator tool to determine how many e-filing workstations it must make available.
- The court must list all workstations (with a preference for onsite locations) that self-represented litigants may use.
- The court must list the manner of assistance to be provided in using the court’s equipment.
- The court will include material on how to provide assistance to self-represented litigants in training its staff.
- The court will make its access plan available on its website, and will regularly review and update the plan.
- The court will create a grievance process.

The largest pilot courts (Oakland, Wayne, and Macomb) provide on-site (or close by) assistance in the form of dedicated computers, scanners, and court staff (or with the assistance of local legal assistance staff) to help filers process their filings. Smaller courts can provide assistance on an ad hoc basis.

Public input will be received through a public hearing May so that a final order can be in place by September. The proposed changes to court rules and related Administrative Order are available [here](#). Comments can be sent to: [ADMcomment@courts.mi.gov](mailto:ADMcomment@courts.mi.gov)

Visit <https://courts.michigan.gov/E-Filing> for more information.