

Mandatory e-filing for Tate County Chancery Court begins June 1

May 22, 2015

Electronic filing of court documents will become mandatory in Tate County Chancery Court on June 1. Voluntary e-filing began on May 4.

Chancery Clerks and their staffs in Panola and Yalobusha counties recently began training in preparation to use e-filing in the near future. E-filing will be utilized across the entire Third Chancery District with the addition of Panola and Yalobusha County Chancery Courts. DeSoto, Grenada and Montgomery County Chancery Courts already utilize the e-filing system provided by Mississippi Electronic Courts.

“That will make it complete,” said Senior Chancery Judge Percy Lynchard. He is eager to have electronic access to documents in all six counties.

“It’s going to be a real pleasure because you won’t have to worry about taking court files anywhere,” Judge Lynchard said. “All you will need is one laptop, as opposed to 30 files.” He and Chancellors Mitchell Lundy and Vicki Cobb hear cases in courthouses from Hernando to Winona in a district that spans nearly 100 miles. “That’s a long distance when somebody forgets to bring a court file.”

E-filing of court records allows judges and attorneys to file and view documents 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and makes public access to court records more convenient. The MEC system is adapted from the electronic filing system used in federal district courts. MEC technology and training are provided free to counties. The only cost to local courts is computer hardware and Internet access.

Judge Lynchard reviews his next day’s docket and case files from home. Electronic access allows him not only to read the records and prepare for hearings, but also lets him know if there’s something which needs to be addressed immediately, such as the appointment of a guardian ad litem.

The public has easier access to court records via MEC. However, some public files, such as those in divorce cases, are not accessible via the Internet to anyone other than the attorneys directly involved in the litigation. Those public files may be viewed in the office of the Chancery Clerk.

About 5,000 attorneys, more than half of the attorneys who practice in Mississippi, are registered to use the MEC system. MEC also has more than 2,000 non-attorney registered users who can access court records via the Internet.

The cost to view documents includes an annual \$10 registration and renewal fee and a viewing fee of 20 cents per page. Register at this link:

<https://www.pamecapps.mec.ms.gov/onlinereg/>.

A total of 29 trial courts now use the MEC e-filing system. The MEC program, under the supervision of the Mississippi Supreme Court, is utilized in 18 counties.

Other e-filing trial courts include the Chancery Courts in Holmes, Lauderdale, Leake, Lowndes, Oktibbeha, Wayne, Webster and Yazoo counties; Chancery and Circuit Courts in Clay County; and all trial courts – Chancery, Circuit and County Courts – in Madison, Harrison, Hinds, Rankin and Warren counties. The Mississippi Supreme Court and Court of Appeals also utilize e-filing.

The link to the Tate County Chancery portal is at <https://tate.chancery.mec.ms.gov/cgi-bin/ShowIndex.pl>. The MEC Helpdesk is at helpdesk@mec.ms.gov.

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