

**Illinois Supreme Court e-Filing  
RFI Questions & Answers  
as of 10/17/2011**

**(Q)** The RFI indicates that filed documents shall be in a "searchable .pdf format". Does that apply to both the pleading itself, **and** any supporting documents? The pleading is certainly likely to have highly-accurate text for searching, because it typically comes from a word-processing program. But supporting documents are more likely to be **scanned**. While scanned documents could certainly be run through optical character recognition (OCR) tool, the resulting text is more error-prone than that in PDFs from a word processor. This significantly increases the chance of "false" hits and "missed" hits when searching.

Requiring all documents to be searchable also complicates the process- today's word processors all produce searchable PDFs directly, so the pleading is not a problem. But while scanning supporting documents is straightforward, requiring filers to learn, deploy and use a separate software utility to OCR the scanned PDFs is not a trivial effort.

**(A)** A searchable PDF. format for the pleading is required, however, documents/exhibits to an actual pleading are not required to be searchable.

**(Q)** The RFI speaks of communicating with "registered users" about filings, and even implies that this includes case litigants. But such communication is called for only **after** the filing is reviewed by the Court and approved/rejected, rather than at the time the filer submits the filing. Is this communications intended to serve as official service to attorneys and litigants, even though it might be delayed if the Court doesn't review the filing promptly?

**(A)** A registered user in this context and litigant are one and the same. A notification will be sent to the registered user/litigant after the Clerk's office has received and reviewed the electronic document for compliance with court rules, notifying the registered user/litigant of acceptance or rejection of the pleading. If rejected, a description of the reason for the rejections shall be included by the Clerk's office in the notification. The "communication" or notification is not intended to serve as an official service to all attorneys or pro se litigants.

**(Q)** What are the proper steps for registering so as to be eligible to conduct business in the State of Illinois.

**(A)** In response to your inquiry as to the process of becoming registered to conduct business in the State of Illinois, please visit the Illinois Secretary of State's website, Department of Business Services at [www.cyberdriveillinois.com](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com)

- (Q) Approximately how many court staff and how many attorney filers will the vendor be asked to train to use the eFiling service?
- (A) The number of court staff and attorney filers the vendor shall train remains uncertain at this time.
- (Q) May we submit our RFI response via email?
- (A) Yes, you may submit your RFI by email to [mroth@court.state.il.us](mailto:mroth@court.state.il.us) or by U.S. mail at the address specified in the RFI.
- (Q) I believe the RFI refers to number of cases (6,000); however, can you provide an estimate number of filings per year?
- (A) The approximate case filings represented in the RFI includes all motion filings in a particular case as well as all cases initiated in 2009.
- (Q) Will the information gathered from this RFI be used to publish a RFP or will the court award a contract from the RFI?
- (A) This question remains uncertain at this time.
- (Q) The RFI says that "The E-filing service shall provide a .pdf converter utility to allow users to convert documents to .pdf format". If it means making the E-filing system server, not the filer, responsible for conversion, this raises various problematic issues

What **liability** would the Court incur by converting a submitted file, given the licensing terms of a server-side conversion tool?

What word processors will be supported? Microsoft Word? Word Perfect? Open source packages such as Open Office?

What **old versions** of each file format will be supported? Word 95? Pre-Corel versions of Word Perfect?

Will **new versions** of each format be supported promptly? While Word 2010 has a built-in .pdf conversion capability, it cannot be guaranteed that makers of **third-party** conversion tools are given advance notice by Microsoft of changes to the MS Word file format.

Will **new word processors** be supported as they come into common use? A few years ago, Open Office probably had a very modest number of users, but at this point it has been downloaded 100 million times.

- (A) The .pdf converter feature is offered as a convenience or service to a potential e-filer who may not have a built-in .pdf conversion tool available in their respective word processing program. The .pdf converter is to convert documents to a .pdf format from some of the most commonly used document formats, such as Microsoft Word, Word Perfect, JPEG, TIF. The filer is responsible for reviewing the converted document(s) to determine if the conversion was completed accurately prior to electronically filing with the Clerk's office. The .pdf conversion tool is not a part of the filing process. The converter can be a service (link from the e-filing server) and does not have to be on the e-filing system server. The e-filing vendor is responsible for any licensing agreement(s) for hardware and software that are components of their respective e-Filing system. The vendor is expected to indicate in their response to the RFI any licensing or use terms and conditions that the Court be responsible for should their system be implemented.