

Technology Plan

First District Court of Appeals

In accordance with Loc.R. 51, this Technology Plan provides an overview of the First District Court of Appeals’ use of technology in the delivery of court services and maintenance of juridical operations. The applications in this Plan include both public-facing technologies serving litigants, attorneys, members of the public and other justice system stakeholders, as well as internal technology systems utilized by judicial officers and court staff. Information technology (“IT”) infrastructure information is not included in this list for safety and security reasons, including firewall, storage system, backup, anti-virus disaster recovery, and cyber security.

The purpose of this Plan is to:

- Define how the Court uses technology to support attorneys, parties, and the public such that these stakeholders are aware of these services available for case management, case filing, recordkeeping, efficient communications, and administrative functions;
- Provide a list of the Court’s IT functions and applications that support serving the public;
- Assist the Court in more readily identifying opportunities for improved efficiency and cost savings through the use of technological solutions; and
- Promote alignment of IT initiatives with the goals of the Court

A. Case Management

The Court uses the following application to manage its docket and related records. The Court uses the C-Track case management system used by all but two courts of appeals in Ohio. The system is used internally only to track case activity, manage workflow tasks, schedule hearings, and generate reports required by the Ohio Supreme Court. The system also provides the ability to send courtesy copies of orders to litigants and counsel via email.

Application	Purpose	How Users Receive Instructions	Dept/Role Responsible
C-Track	Case management system used by court staff	Vendor training materials; internal training documents; hands-on instruction from other employees	Administrative Staff

B. Filings/Clerk of Court Functions

The Hamilton Count Clerk of Courts (“the Clerk”) is a separate entity from the Court. The Clerk is an elected position in the county. As such, the Court has no authority over the systems used by the Clerks’ office. Court employees are trained on accessing the systems (CMS, Paper on Demand) to obtain case documents when needed.

The Clerk accepts court filings and maintains official case documents.

The Clerk accepts e-filing. There is an e-filing guide for users which is published on the Court’s website, along with a link to the Clerk’s e-filing system.

The public is able to access court documents on the Clerk of Courts’ website.

C. Dispute Resolution

The Court offers mediation services both in-person and remotely via Zoom. The Court offers the use of a computer on-site for those who do not have the necessary equipment at home.

Application	Purpose	How Users Receive Instructions	Dept/Role Responsible
Zoom	Remote mediation	Via email from the Mediation attorney or her staff	Mediation Attorney

D. Fiscal

Performance is the county’s application for all budget-related activities including the submission of requisitions, submission of reimbursement requests, payment of invoices, and budget management.

Application	Purpose	How Users Receive Instructions	Dept/Role Responsible
Performance	General fund and grant budget management and workflow	Vendor materials; training from county auditor’s office	Fiscal Officer and Court Administrator

E. Hearings

The Court uses Zoom to conduct virtual oral arguments when requested. Currently the Court is only able to use Zoom when all parties and the Court appear via Zoom. The Court offers the use of a computer on site for those who do not have the necessary equipment at home.

The Court live-streams all oral arguments on its YouTube channel which is accessible to the public through a link on the Court’s website.

The Court also records all oral arguments.

Application	Purpose	How Users Receive Instructions	Dept/Role Responsible
Zoom	Virtual hearings	Via email from the Court; also available on Court website	Assignment Commissioner and Assistant Court Administrator
YouTube	Live stream hearings	Instructions for access are on the Court’s website; parties are also notified that arguments are live-streamed	Court Administrator, Assistant Court Administrator, Courtroom bailiff
DCR/BIS	Record hearings and provide audio and visual feed to stream on YouTube	Vendor instructions and training from other Court employees	Court Administrator, Assistant Court Administrator, Courtroom bailiff

F. Human Resources

The Ohio Supreme Court provides the Court with the OAKS system for time-keeping and payroll. The Court inputs employees’ time on a weekly basis. Employees are not able to input their own time, but they are able to manage their own benefits via the MyOhio.gov website.

Application	Purpose	How Users Receive Instructions	Dept/Role Responsible
OAKS	Time-keeping and payroll	Vendor instructions; training from Ohio Supreme Court employees; training from other Court employees; training from Department of Administrative Services	Fiscal Officer and Court Administrator
MyOhio.gov	Benefits management	Vendor instructions	Fiscal Officer

G. Records Retention/Management

The Clerk of Courts is the keeper of the official record for cases. The Court currently uses Google Drive to upload certain case documents (briefs mostly) for easy access by the judges and their staff.

The Court recently moved to Microsoft Office 365 which includes OneDrive. The Court will be moving from Google Drive to OneDrive for the uploading of case materials for access by the judges and their staff.

For administrative documents, the Court uses a simple network share drive with a folder based storage system. Access to sensitive documents is limited as necessary by restricting access to the folder.

Application	Purpose	How Users Receive Instructions	Dept/Role Responsible
Google Drive	Upload of briefs for review by judges and staff attorneys	Via email from Assignment Commissioner	Assignment Commissioner
OneDrive	Future upload of briefs and case transcripts for use by judges and staff attorneys	Via email from Assignment Commissioner	Assignment Commissioner
Share Drive	Administrative document organization and storage	Employee training	Administrative staff

H. Website

Application	Purpose	How Users Receive Instructions	Dept/Role Responsible
Wordpress	Website design and maintenance	Training from contracted website designer; training from other employees	Court Administrator

I. Accommodations

Application	Purpose	How Users Receive Instructions	Dept/Role Responsible
-------------	---------	--------------------------------	-----------------------

Soundmate	Assistance for the hearing impaired in the courtrooms	Users are instructed by court staff	Court Administrator, Assistant Court Administrator, Courtroom bailiff
-----------	---	-------------------------------------	---

J. Future Implementation Plans

1. Hearings

The Court has recently purchased equipment to enable it to conduct hybrid oral arguments which would allow for situations when some parties or judges are remote and others are in-person. The Court is hoping to be able to offer hybrid arguments sometime in the first half of 2023.

K. Wish List

1. Human Resources

The Court hopes to eventually move to a system that would allow employees to input their own time (e.g. Kronos).

2. Accommodations

The Court hopes to upgrade the options for hearing impaired listening in the courtroom.