



201 East Washington Avenue, Room G200
P.O. Box 8916
Madison, WI 53708-8916
Telephone: 608-266-8684
Fax: 608-261-6972

Governor Scott Walker
Secretary Eloise Anderson

Secretary's Office

February 26, 2015

Clerk of Supreme Court
ATTN: Deputy Clerk
P.O. Box 1688
Madison, WI 53701-1688

Re: Rule Petition 14-03 relating to mandatory electronic filing in circuit court and conversion to electronic circuit court records

Dear Clerk of Court:

I am writing in support of Supreme Court Rule Petition 14-03 creating Wis. Stat. §801.18 to require the use of electronic filing in Wisconsin circuit courts and conversion to electronic circuit court records.

The Department of Children and Families is charged with administering the Child Support Program in Wisconsin. The Department contracts with county child support agencies to operate the program. Washington County began piloting the e-filing program in their child support agency in July of 2014. Since that time, 8 additional county child support agencies have begun e-filing and we anticipate that the Milwaukee County Child Support Agency will begin e-filing in the spring of 2015. The use of e-filing has led to greater efficiencies in child support agencies, particularly in larger agencies where time is lost waiting for paperwork to be routed. The child support program currently has over 300,000 cases with court orders and having immediate access to documents enhances the ability of the program to timely establish paternity and establish and enforce support orders.

The Department supports e-filing with the understanding that child support agencies will not be charged a fee for electronic filing. The child support program files nearly 40,000 actions or motions for modifications on previously filed actions every year. We anticipate that more than one attorney may file documents in at least 50% of those actions, thus incurring in excess of \$50,000 per year in e-filing fees. As a government agency, we do not have the funding to support those additional costs.

Based on our experience with e-filing thus far, we have some comments related to improving the efficiency of the e-filing system for high-volume filers, which would include both government agencies and large private firms.

We propose that large agencies/firms be given the option to designate an administrator within their office who would have the ability to delete a former employee's access to all cases managed by the agency/firm. Under the current system, if a caseworker leaves the employment of the agency, each attorney that delegated access to their cases to that caseworker must go in and

delete their access. Not only would this be more efficient, it would also significantly reduce the risk that a former employee might still have access to confidential case information.

We support having a process within the e-filing system that allows confidential information under Wis. Stat. §49.22(12) to be redacted based upon notification from the CSA that the requirements of that section have been met without the need for a court order to seal the information. Under §49.22(12), child support agencies are prohibited from releasing address information if they have reason to believe that doing so may result in physical or emotional harm to the person about whom the information is sought. Having to obtain a court order would remove some of the efficiencies created by the e-filing process and increase the risk that confidential information on the whereabouts of a party who is subject to privacy protection may be released.

Finally, we request that judges and court commissioners be provided with the software that would enable them to edit .pdf documents. Under current practice, if a document requires a judge's signature, it must be generated as a Word document and then converted to a .pdf document for filing. This adds another step to the process of e-filing which often results in a document that is formatted differently from the .pdf version.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed rule.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eloise Anderson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Eloise Anderson
Secretary