

Starting July 1, 2023



Remote Public Access

February 23, 2023

To all local attorneys:

I hope this new year finds you well. I also hope you are aware by now there are some major changes coming to Case.net this summer to expand public access to public case documents from personal electronic devices. This will fulfill a long-term goal for our Missouri courts.

Since its inception in the 1990s, Case.net has allowed the public to retrieve real-time public information about public cases, such as party and attorney information, detailed docket entries, and scheduled hearings and trials. Over the years, while the information available to the public via Case.net expanded, it has provided links only to civil and criminal judgments.

With the implementation of Missouri's electronic filing system in 2011, registered e-filing users could log into "secure Case.net" to see documents remotely, but the public could not. Instead, the public could only see public case documents by using designated computer terminals in local courthouses. Beginning July 1, however, this distinction will begin dropping, and the public also will have remote access to public case documents.

What does this mean for you?

While your obligation to redact confidential information as required by law is not new, the increased public access to court documents underscores the need for diligence and care in carrying out this redaction responsibility. Links to revised rules regarding redaction and information about CLEs and other resources available to help you meet this obligation are available from The Missouri Bar's website (use the QR code on the next page).

Beginning July 1, for every document you file, you will be required to certify you have complied with your redaction obligation as to that document. If you make a mistake – either by failing to redact information that should have been redacted or by redacting too much information – the judiciary is working on a mechanism to allow filers to correct mistakes while protecting potentially confidential information from public view.

But your best protection is to do all you can now to determine how best to protect your clients' confidential information in your area of practice. Please take the time to do so, and let us know if you have particular questions or concerns.

What other specifics should you know?

July 1 is a statewide deadline for when filers will be required to certify all documents meet redaction requirements. But not all public case documents will be available remotely to the public on that date. Instead, there will be a schedule for when a particular court’s public documents will become remotely accessible.

But please note – once remote access is granted for a particular court, that court’s public case documents will be available retroactively to July 1, 2023. The public will use the designated computer terminals in local courthouses to see public case documents filed before then.

When will public case documents become accessible remotely?

To help balance the expansion of remote public access to Case.net with the anticipated resulting demand on the judiciary’s information technology systems, the Missouri Court Automation Committee – the statutory committee overseeing the state’s case management system – has set the following implementation schedule, for 2023:

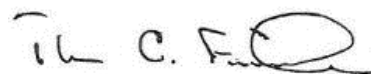
Remote access date	Courts (including all districts or divisions)
On July 1	Supreme Court of Missouri, Missouri Court of Appeals
No later than August 1	Circuits 1 through 9
No later than September 1	Circuits 10 through 19
No later than October 1	Circuits 20 through 29
No later than November 1	Circuits 30 through 46

But remember:

Although public case documents filed in this circuit will not become remotely available to the public until August 01, 2023, that expanded access will work retroactively to public case documents filed on or after July 1, 2023. Documents filed before that date will continue to be available at the public access terminals in every state courthouse.

The clerks, judges and I appreciate your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Thomas C. Fincham, Presiding Judge

