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Hidalgo County

District Clerk

Hidalgo County E-filing Go-Live

The County of Hidalgo implemented its E-filing go-live date of September 17th in anticipation of mandatory e-filing which becomes effective January 1, 2014.

The implementation didn't go off without a glitch. With Tyler Project Managers and IT staff on site, the district clerk office was able to test e-filing transactions and assist law offices in resolving technical issues as they occurred.

Additionally, the "go-live team" was able to collect important data to help further address and resolve potential issues and fine-tune configuration and business processes.

Among the most common issues were:

- Vendor service provider issues/updates
- TexFile portal configuration issues

With the new year quickly approaching, the district clerk office encourages attorneys and legal professionals to select an EFSP and e-file their documents in lieu of conducting over the counter transactions. This will aid filers in becoming familiar with the e-filing mechanics and ensuring they are equipped to process their e-filing transactions and avoid any potential issues that may arise.



The Rules of Civil and Appellate Procedure have been updated and will be effective as of January 1, 2014. The rules can be downloaded at:

<http://www.supreme.courts.state.tx.us>

Public comments on the updates will be accepted through October 30, 2013. You can send your comments to rulescomments@txcourts.gov or mail them Attn: Rules Attorney, P.O. Box 12248, Austin, TX 78711.

www.co.hidalgo.tx.us/districtclerk



Standing Order



Beginning October 21, 2013, the 139th District Court and County Court at Law No. 7 will require attorneys to E-File all documents relating to Family and Civil Law cases with the District Clerk. **NO PAPER FILING WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

TexasCourtHelp

Texas Court Help is a website that will give you information about making your way through the court system. However, it is important to remember that the information provided is basic, general information only and may not cover everything that is involved in your case. The information on the website is not legal advice, and does not take the place of talking to a lawyer. The website information is provided in both English and Spanish.

The law and court proceedings are complicated, and lawyers have legal training. A lawyer can help you understand your rights and options and help get the best result possible in your case. If you go to court without a lawyer, there may be serious consequences and you may be hurt in ways you have not considered before.

If your case is a criminal case, it is especially important to have a lawyer to protect your rights. If you need help finding a lawyer and your case is a criminal case, information about lawyers for criminal cases is available under the Criminal Case topic.

If you need help finding a lawyer for a civil case, information about lawyers is available under the How to Find a Lawyer topic on the civil case page, with links to different groups and services that can refer you to a lawyer.



The Texas Law Help website: www.texaslawhelp.org is another helpful resource for people who do not have a lawyer. They have information on many topics including: Civil Rights, Consumer Cases, Wills and Estates, Family Law, Forms & Instructions, Mediation, Spanish Resources, among others.

Texas Law Help also has a Live Chat service available through its website. With Live Chat, you can type messages to a lawyer who can give you information about the law and point you in the right direction. Live Chat is free and is available Monday through Friday from 9am to 5pm.

E-filing Webinar Training

The district clerk office continues to stream the e-filing training webinars every Wednesday and Friday at the courthouse auditorium. Attorneys and legal professionals are invited to drop in and take advantage of the training opportunities at 9am on Wednesdays and 4pm on Fridays. The presentations are approximately 30 minutes.

Otherwise, filers can register for the webinar training at www.textfile.com for any of the following online training:

October

Tuesday, October 8, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CDT
Wednesday, October 9, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CDT
Thursday, October 10, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CDT
Friday, October 11, 2013 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM CDT
Tuesday, October 15, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CDT
Wednesday, October 16, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CDT
Thursday, October 17, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CDT
Friday, October 18, 2013 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM CDT
Tuesday, October 22, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CDT
Wednesday, October 23, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CDT
Thursday, October 24, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CDT
Friday, October 25, 2013 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM CDT
Tuesday, October 29, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CDT
Wednesday, October 30, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CDT
Thursday, October 31, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CDT

November

Friday, November 1, 2013 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM CDT
Tuesday, November 5, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CST
Wednesday, November 6, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CST
Thursday, November 7, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CST
Friday, November 8, 2013 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM CST
Tuesday, November 12, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CST
Wednesday, November 13, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CST
Thursday, November 14, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CST
Friday, November 15, 2013 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM CST
Tuesday, November 19, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CST
Wednesday, November 20, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CST
Thursday, November 21, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CST
Friday, November 22, 2013 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM CST
Tuesday, November 26, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CST

December

Tuesday, December 3, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CST
Wednesday, December 4, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CST
Thursday, December 5, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CST
Tuesday, December 10, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CST
Wednesday, December 11, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CST
Thursday, December 12, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CST
Tuesday, December 17, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CST
Wednesday, December 18, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CST
Thursday, December 19, 2013 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM CST



Breast Cancer Awareness Month



Remember the three tools of detection:

1. Mammogram
2. Self Exam
3. Doctors Visit

Together we can help raise breast cancer awareness!

On Monday, October 7th the Hidalgo County Commissioners' Court proclaimed October 2013 as "Breast Cancer Awareness Month." District clerk staff donned their shades of pink in support of the proclamation and the cause which helps bring public awareness to the critical issue.

There are many ways individuals can help spread awareness and help support those affected by breast cancer. To find out more about volunteering, fundraising or helping spread the message of the importance of early detection log on to :

www.nationalbreastcancer.org

District clerk staff participated in the 5th Annual Love Your Cha Cha's 5K Run/Walk on October 12th in Edinburg, Texas. The purpose of the event, founded by JoAnne Perez Pena, is to raise awareness regarding breast cancer and the importance of early detection.

Hundreds of supporters filled the Edinburg town square in support of the cause which will benefit local families through the Renaissance Cancer Foundation in McAllen, Texas.



Pictured from L to R: Stephanie Palacios, Jassia De La Paz, Irene Caceres, Melinda Sotuyo, Claudia Rodriguez, Irma Lopez, Zayra Narvaez, Yesica Garza

Legislative Report



The 2013 Legislative Analysis Report, compiled by TAC legislative staff, is now available online.

The report summarizes significant county-related bills that passed during the 83rd Regular and Special Sessions of the Texas Legislature. The complete text of each of the bills summarized in the report can be viewed on the Texas Legislature Online website by clicking on the bill number in the document. The report is available at:

<http://county.org/member-services/legislative-updates/presentations/Documents/2013%20Legislative%20Conference%20Docs/LegisAnalysisReport.pdf>

Gov. Appoints 92nd District Court Judge



On October 3, 2013, Gov. Rick Perry appointed Jaime E. Tijerina of Mission as judge of the 92nd Judicial District for a term to expire at the next general election.

Tijerina is an attorney in private practice and a lieutenant colonel of the U.S. Army Reserve Judge Advocate General Corps with tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan. He is also owner and managing partner of Tijerina Ranch, and is the former Kenedy County attorney, a position he was first elected to in 2001 and has held for 12 years. Tijerina is a member of the State Bar of Texas and Hidalgo County Bar Association, and a fellow of the College of the State Bar of Texas. He is a past member and former board member of the Hidalgo County Young Lawyers Association and Texas District and County Attorney's Association, former panel chair of a State Bar Grievance Committee, and a former board member and past president of the University of Texas Pan American Alumni Association.

Tijerina received a bachelor's degree from the University of Texas-Pan American and a law degree from The Thurgood Marshall School of Law at Texas Southern University. Tijerina is also a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College.

Child Support Newsflash



The Office of the Attorney General's Child Support Division would like to assist counties in complying with changes made by SB 355 to Texas Family Code (TFC) sections 82.004 and 85.042.

- **Contents of Application [TFC § 82.004(5)]:** If the county maintains an application form for a protective order, ensure it includes a line asking if the applicant is receiving child support services from the Office of the Attorney General (Title IV-D Agency), and a line for the agency case number for each open case, if known. If the application is maintained by the Texas Supreme Court or another entity, it is the responsibility of the owner of the application to make any required changes.
- **Delivery of Order to Other Persons [TFC § 85.042(a)(3)]:** If the protective order application indicates the applicant is receiving child support services from the Office of the Attorney General (OAG), the clerk of the court must provide a copy of the protective order and the required information under Government Code § 411.042(b)(6). Please include the agency case number, if the applicant provided it.

If the protective order is filed together with a registry-only child support order, the county should handle it according to current procedures. When a protective order is filed by itself, apart from a child support or other order, the clerk of the court may provide the required information to the OAG in the same manner other child support documents are currently being provided.

The Official E-filing System for Texas



The Texas Supreme Court has mandated e-filing in all civil cases, including family and probate cases, by attorneys in appellate courts, and in all non-juvenile civil cases in district courts, statutory county courts, constitutional county courts, and statutory probate courts. The order sets out a schedule for implementation beginning with the most populous counties in January 2014, which includes Hidalgo County.

On September 17th Hidalgo County began accepting civil case e-filings through TexFile, the State's new e-filing portal. We encourage filers to begin the e-filing process in anticipation of the mandatory e-filing date.

E-filing allows attorneys, paralegals, and other filers to:

- Select the service provider of your choice and register free-of-charge
- Submit court documents online to any participating court
- Have your filing fees automatically calculated for you when you submit filings
- Receive filing status updates via email
- Get a file-stamped copy upon the clerk's acceptance

Attorneys/filers are encouraged to visit www.texfile.com to access additional e-filing information such as:

- Upcoming online training dates and registration
- Training videos for filers as well as user documentation
- Texfile overview presentation (by David Slayton at State Bar Meeting) available for download
- Transition information such as e-filing key dates/information and e-filing FAQs
- Other related links: Existing e-filing providers, Supreme Court Mandate, Press Releases

Key Dates:

September 17, 2013

Hidalgo County begins accepting e-filings through TexFile, the State's new e-filing portal. Filers are encouraged to start e-filing in anticipation of the mandatory e-filing date.

October 21, 2013

139th District Court and County Court at Law No. 7 will require attorneys to E-File all documents relating to Family and Civil Law cases with the District Clerk. NO PAPER FILINGS ACCEPTED.

January 1, 2014

Mandatory e-filing takes effect for the 10 most populous counties in the State, including the County of Hidalgo.

Contact Information

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e: districtclerk@co.hidalgo.tx.us

Office Hours

Monday—Friday

7:30am—5:30pm



Please visit our website! Whether verifying fees, responding to your jury summons, or accessing case and passport information, you will find all the information you need here:

www.co.hidalgo.tx.us/districtclerk

We also encourage your honest assessment of our services as we continue to evolve and improve through your valuable input. Email your comments to: districtclerk@co.hidalgo.tx.us

JCIT Subcommittee Appointments



Laura was appointed to serve on the JCIT E-filing *Implementation and Outreach Subcommittee* which was designed to develop a strategic plan for the implementation and roll out of TexFile, in addition to developing an outreach plan of events attended by stakeholders as a means to educate and inform them regarding the e-filing project.

In September 2013, Laura was also appointed to a “TexFile Subcommittee” put together by the Office of Court Administration (OCA) and the Judicial Committee on Information Technology (JCIT) to help vet issues and provide direction and prioritization during the implementation of the state-wide e-filing project.

Judicial Annex



Pictured from L to R: Melinda Gonzalez, Sandra Garza, Irineo Razo, Sabrina Guerra, Joel De Leon, Viola Riojas, Jannel Garza, Beatriz Escobar, Pedro Navarro, Oneida Lamas

The Judicial Annex officially opened its doors in August 2013 housing Master Courts 1 and 2, County Courts at Law 7 and 8, the Child Protection Court and a “satellite” District Clerk Office.

Our Judicial Annex Office welcomes you Monday thru Friday from 8am to 5pm. Any filings that need to be made before 8am can be made at our main New Filings Window inside the courthouse until the Supreme Court mandate takes effect in January 2014.

Our friendly staff is ready to assist you. Please pay us a visit!