April 1, 2019

The Honorable Charles T. Canady
Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Florida
500 South Duval Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1900

RE: Florida Courts Technology Commission Yearly Report

Dear Chief Justice Canady:

Under the direction of the Supreme Court, the Florida Courts Technology Commission (hereinafter “FCTC” or “Commission”) oversees, manages, and directs the development and use of technology within the branch. In carrying out that purpose, the Commission performs its rule-based responsibilities consistent with the 2016-2021 Long-Range Strategic Plan for the Florida Judicial Branch. The primary responsibilities of the Commission are to promote public trust and confidence in the judicial branch by delivering timely, consistent, and useful information through traditional and innovative communication methods, as well as utilizing compatible technology infrastructures to improve case management and efficiencies in judicial decision-making in meeting the needs of Florida’s State Court System.

As Chair of the Commission, I respectfully submit this report on the Commission’s work from April 2018 through March 2019. As you will find documented in this report, the Commission and its subcommittees continue to enhance the broad range of court services and technology solutions designed to meet the needs of court users by improving transparency, interconnectivity, innovation, and accessibility to all.

The Supreme Court adopted the Florida Trial Court Technology Strategic Plan (“Plan”) in January 2015. The Plan identifies the necessary business and corresponding technical capabilities the trial courts must possess to function effectively. This Plan, among other things, provides a comprehensive view of technology in the circuits; considers technology needs of the trial courts now and in the future; and creates a flexible system that can evolve with technology and the public’s needs. However, the Plan has now expired and needs to be updated. In the past, this Plan was an initiative of the Trial Court Budget Commission (“TCBC”), in conjunction with consultants from the National Center for State Courts and with input from the Trial Court
Administrators and Trial Court Technology Officers. Because the Plan is technology-centric, I would like the Commission, along with the Office of Information Technology, to spearhead this initiative with budgetary review and input from the TCBC. It has been an honor and a privilege to contribute to these advancements and collaborative accomplishments for the judicial branch.

Sincerely,

Lisa T. Munyon
Circuit Judge

Enclosure
Florida Courts Technology Commission

2019 Yearly Report

April 1, 2019
On July 1, 2010, the Florida Courts Technology Commission was formed pursuant to Rule 2.236, Florida Rules of Judicial Administration (“RJA”). The Commission was established to advise the Chief Justice and Supreme Court on matters relating to the use of technology in the judicial branch. To ensure continuity and experience on the Commission, the Commission has staggered, three-year terms of membership. The FCTC is responsible for ensuring technology initiatives, specific to the Trial Courts, are aligned with the 2016-2021 Long-Range Strategic Plan for the Florida Judicial Branch while complying with technology policies established by the Supreme Court.

To align with the State Court System’s goal of having a statewide information technology system to adequately support effective and efficient case management and management of caseloads and court resources, the FCTC continues to collaborate with justice system partners to deliver electronic access to court records and provide a single statewide point of access for filing court records, and to continue enhancing the electronic filing systems to allow additional access to the judicial process by all stakeholders.

For Florida to continue to be a front-runner in developing and embracing technology, we must lead by example and set new standards for innovation, transparency, productivity, and accessibility for all. As technology advances, the Florida court system strives to achieve affordability, modernization, and interconnectivity by using data to drive the most efficient use of resources, invest resources wisely, and deliver the best outcomes for the citizens of Florida by improving data sharing and data integration with justice system partners. The Commission strives to expand the use of existing and emerging technologies to enhance access to information and services and deploy technology to facilitate the effective, efficient, and fair disposition of cases in a timely manner. Today, the courts are dependent on information technology in almost every area of court business including electronic filing, case management, electronic document management and imaging, workflow management and public access to court-related documents, materials, and information.

Currently, there are seven subcommittees and six workgroups working under the auspices of the Commission to focus on different areas of technology in our courts. Several workgroups were deactivated due to inactivity or no current tasks. Through the subcommittees, and workgroups, the Commission has taken on several projects. These groups and the Commission as a whole have
devoted considerable time and effort to improving technology in the courts.

During the year, the Commission has continued collaborative work with the Rules of Judicial Administration Committee (“RJAC”) to establish, combine, and modernize all the technology standards of the court into a consolidated technology standard document, as well as removing the technology standards from the rules. The Commission’s continued collaboration with the Florida Court Clerks and Comptrollers (“FCCC”) to establish a single statewide point of access for filing court records and allowing additional access to all stakeholders for statewide uniformity as well as moving towards a statewide electronic court system has come to fruition. As of February 2019, the Supreme Court and all five DCAs are electronically filing through the Portal. Details are included in the Appellate Court Technology Committee update.

The Commission’s work, related to tasks assigned to each group, is described in the following Subcommittee and Workgroup Activities section.

Subcommittee and Workgroup Activities

A. Appellate Courts Technology Committee

The purpose of the Appellate Courts Technology Committee (“ACTC”), which is a standing committee of the FCTC and reports its technology-based activities to the FCTC, is to provide technical guidance and consultation to the Commission and the Office of the State Courts Administrator (“OSCA”) regarding information systems development and operational policies and procedures related to automation in Florida’s District Courts of Appeal (“DCAs”). The ACTC is responsible for ensuring technology initiatives, specific to the appellate courts, are aligned with the 2016-2021 Long-Range Strategic Plan for the Florida Judicial Branch, and comply with standards developed by the FCTC.

In keeping with the 2016-2021 Long-Range Strategic Plan for the Florida Judicial Branch, the eFACTS project under the successful direction of the eFACTS Change Advisory Board (“CAB”) is scheduled for completion of the following list of goals anticipated to be accomplished at the end of 2019: 1) transition to maintenance mode which includes key components necessary for efficient case management in the Supreme Court and five DCAs with a focus on sustainability by being stable,
serviceable, recoverable, affordable and able to provide good performance; 2) transition to the Portal will move all appellate courts from eDCA to the statewide Portal and continue accessing the attorney/party web portal via eDCA; 3) the retirement of all legacy applications that are associated with the Supreme Court and DCA case management systems; 4) unification of eFACTS & iDCA/eDCA, while retaining the benefits of all applications; 5) uniform case management system provided to the Supreme Court and all five DCAs when feasible; and 6) an agile approach to identify and capitalize on opportunities for system improvements.

All activities listed above are tracking on schedule for completion by the end of 2019. The OSCA and the FCCC recently worked together in cooperation with the DCAs to successfully integrate eFACTS with the statewide E-Filing Portal (“Portal”). The e-filing transition is complete, and all jurisdictions in Florida are receiving their filings and payments electronically through the Portal and reviewing/processing them inside of eFACTS.

B. Portal Subcommittee

As the statewide access point for electronic transmission of court records, the Portal continues to provide a simple and secure digital solution for users of Florida’s court system while saving filers millions of dollars in related expenses. As of February 2019, electronic filings have increased to an average of 70,000 a day and over 1.5 million submissions per month. With numerous filer roles now able to file through the Portal, the number of registered filers has increased to over 226,000. Today, the Portal is being evaluated in many initiatives regarding statewide uniformity.

In conjunction with the FCCC, the subcommittee continues to review and endorse Portal enhancement requests by users. The following are a few of the Portal enhancements the subcommittee endorsed for the Portal releases in 2018: 1) filing documents to multiple cases and filing multiple cases in one submission; 2) removing the number of pages requirement when uploading documents; 3) allowing submissions received in the Proposed Order filing path and returned to the Correction Queue to be moved to another judge; 4) adding case manager filer role to the e-service list; 5) increasing the submission size for the appellate courts to 200 MB; 6) allowing documents to bypass clerk review and go directly into the CMS based on docket code;
and 7) adding search functionality to the Document Description screen in the Portal Review. In addition to the Portal enhancements, the subcommittee assisted with the PDF/A alert language for filers on the documents tab in the Portal. This language along with a FAQ’s page and a training video link will notify filers of the anticipated PDF/A filing format requirements to begin educating filers.

In the third quarter of 2018, the Portal experienced technical issues which had a statewide impact on filings. In conjunction with the FCCC, the subcommittee reviewed and endorsed a proposed Service Disruption Communications Policy. The communications policy includes: 1) identifying what areas could experience service interruptions; 2) what users would be impacted; 3) the scope of the disruption; 4) reporting a service disruption; 5) follow-up reporting; and 6) an E-Filing Authority Board escalation process for sending external communication. This will ensure proper communication is sent to all affected parties/users of the Portal immediately, if necessary. The Office of Information Technology (“OIT”) in OSCA assisted the FCCC in gathering the proper notification email addresses for the courts, to include OIT and Supreme Court Managers, Court Technology Officers, and internal circuit email groups, to ensure all areas of the courts are properly notified of a disruption.

The Portal subcommittee continues to work with the FCCC to explore additional Portal innovations which can provide more efficient utilization of the Portal throughout the state.

C. Criminal Case Initiation Workgroup (“CCIW”)
The FCTC created a workgroup to evaluate the utility of a uniform, electronic system for criminal case initiation. The workgroup determined the foundation of this objective includes standardizing criminal case initiation data elements, workflows, and transmission configurations. In coordinating with justice system partners to share information and promote services which further the interests of court users, the Criminal Case Initiation Workgroup membership was expanded to include stakeholders of the criminal justice system, i.e., Florida Sheriffs Association, Florida Department of Law Enforcement (“FDLE”), Florida Prosecuting Attorneys Association, Florida Police Chiefs Association, and Florida Public Defenders Association, to name a few.
To move forward with uniformity, a Data Element Subgroup was formed to identify a standard list of data elements for criminal case initiation. In the third quarter of 2018, the Data Element Subgroup began reviewing the previously approved criminal data elements from 2010. In addition, the legislature passed Senate Bill 1392 regarding data transparency elements that will be required to be reported in the future. In reviewing these documents, the subgroup developed a proposed standard list of data elements for criminal case initiation. Currently, the subgroup is reviewing the proposed list with law enforcement agencies over WebEx to ensure a complete list is recommended to the Commission at the May 2019 meeting.

Once the data elements are finalized and approved, a Technical Subgroup will be formed to evaluate how electronic criminal case initiations can be implemented within criminal justice system workflows. The Data Element and Technical Subgroup will strive for modernization and interconnectivity with the numerous stakeholders and various systems involved in this complex initiative. The work of the subgroups will be included within any proposal presented to the FCTC regarding criminal case initiation.

D. Joint FCTC/FDC Workgroup

The Joint FCTC/Florida Department of Corrections (“FDC”) workgroup was regenerated in October 2018. The purpose of the joint workgroup is to improve efficiencies between the FDC and the courts within our electronic system. Since the last meeting in 2016, the FDC has implemented multimedia tablets and kiosks in facilities to provide inmates with electronic access. Additionally, the passage of Senate Bill 1392 on data transparency directed the FDC to digitize the Criminal Punishment Code sentencing scoresheet.

In February 2019, the joint workgroup met to continue brainstorming ways to enhance the electronic interaction between the FDC and the courts. The workgroup explored the extent to which the FDC currently utilizes the Portal for electronic filing of violation of probation (“VOP”) packages with the courts. In 2016, the Portal had initiated a proposed order filing path which would allow FDC staff to send VOP filings directly to the court electronically. Currently, only one county is utilizing this functionality in the Portal and assistance is needed to communicate the
availability of this functionality to all of the circuits. The workgroup agreed to work collaboratively on this initiative, and the FDC agreed to demonstrate the process at their Statewide Administrators meeting in July 2019.

Another recent initiative involved the electronic delivery of the prison commitment packet. In 2018, a pilot program was implemented with local counties and sheriffs to send the commitment packet to the reception centers through the Portal. This initiative requires the collective effort of the local clerk of court and sheriff to combine their electronic documents into one complete PDF packet that is electronically submitted through the Portal. Although, a utility tool was offered to assist with merging the documents into one PDF, challenges were met with training issues between the local clerks and sheriffs where the submissions have been unsuccessful. The courts will reach out to local sheriffs in determining deficiencies and provide any assistance with collaboration where applicable.

Other objectives include electronic processes for presentence investigations (“PSIs”); records on appeal; and e-filing for inmates through the Portal. Unfortunately, the FDC has significant funding challenges that impact its ability to implement certain electronic initiatives. The workgroup will continue to collaborate to improve efficiencies on electronic interactions between the FDC and the courts.

E. Operational Procedure Review Workgroup
In 2018, the Operational Procedure Review Workgroup continued their efforts to update and modernize the FCTC’s Operational Procedures. The workgroup produced a final draft for first reading at the February 8, 2019 FCTC meeting. The following are a few of the highlighted sections that were modified or established: 1) Commission Meetings and Voting was modified to specify procedures regarding designation of an Acting Chair and to clarify voting procedures, 2) Appearance Before the Commission was modified to specify procedures regarding how requested items are designated on the agenda, 3) Conflicts was added to allow procedures for any discrepancies that may arise, 4) Process for Notification of Modifications to Approved E-Filing Systems was added to provide quality assurance and a formal process for court entities to modify an approved e-filing system, and 5) Rule Changes was added to allow a formalized process for publishing comments.
involving rule changes. The workgroup will recommend the *FCTC Operational Procedures* to the Commission for final approval at the May 3, 2019 FCTC meeting in anticipation of Supreme Court approval. Once complete, the workgroup will continue to audit and monitor the procedures for updates.

**F. Joint FCTC/RJAC Workgroup**

The Joint FCTC/RJAC Workgroup assisted members of the Rules of Judicial Administration Subcommittee B updating the following rules to match the reality that has emerged since the Portal became the central filing facility: 2.345 Electronic Signature of Court Official; 2.511 Florida Courts E-Filing Portal; 2.514 Computing and Extending Time; 2.516 Service; 2.520 Documents; and 2.525 Filing. The RJAC has recommended that the rules be rewritten to match current practices of electronic filing. The RJAC updated Florida Rules of Judicial Administration 2.505 and added (g) Stand-In Counsel. This allows an attorney to stand in for another attorney to cover a proceeding or hearing only by filing a notice of stand-in counsel or announcing on the record an appearance as stand-in counsel. Fla. R. Jud. Admin. 2.505(e)(5) Notice of Limited Appearance allows an attorney to represent a client at a certain hearing. Stand-in counsel and limited appearance counsel both define counsel of record. Fla. R. Jud. Admin. 2.515(d) Representations to Court basically says a person is considered counsel based on whose credentials are used to file the pleading, regardless if the pleading is filed by the attorney or the paralegal, and that person is responsible for what transpires in the case. Similarly, Fla. R. Jud. Admin. 2.515(c) Form of Signature Block identifies a person as a signer within an electronic document by including the electronic signature indicator s/, /s or /s/ for each signer. If the attorney’s name is on the pleading, but s/, /s or /s/ is not by the name, the attorney is not counsel of record for that purpose and is not responsible for what occurs in the case. The full technology packet of electronic changes to the RJA will be filed by the Florida Bar in January 2020.

Another issue the RJAC is reviewing whether clerks have a role in identifying the twenty-two confidential items in Fla. R. Jud. Admin. 2420, absent the filer identifying the items. The role of the filer versus the role of the clerk needs to be clearly defined. This issue is before an ad hoc subcommittee of the RJAC. The FCTC chair and the chair of the RJAC received a letter from the Florida Supreme Court Clerk’s Office requesting the FCTC and the RJAC create a joint workgroup to
look at issues regarding access to court records. That joint workgroup has been appointed. The outcome of the joint workgroup’s report will be included in the FCTC’s 2020 Yearly Report to the Court.

G. Certification Subcommittee

The Certification Subcommittee was established to view demonstrations and certify vendors in compliance with the Functional Requirements for Court Application Processing System (“CAPS”). CAPS is a software application that allows court files to be displayed and utilized electronically. These standards identify the specific requirements of a CAPS system utilized by judges or their staff to access and use electronic case files and other data sources in the course of managing cases, scheduling and conducting hearings, adjudicating disputed issues, and recording and reporting judicial activity on the bench or remotely. In 2018, the subcommittee published version 5.0 of the Functional Requirements for CAPS. This version includes requirements for the CAPS to 1) be made available to the trial courts of Florida, in every division, county and circuit, 2) permit proposed orders to be received through the Portal and signed orders to be filed directly to the clerk’s case maintenance system (“CMS”) or Portal and served through the Portal, CMS, or CAPS, 3) generate orders from templates, 4) permit editing of the proposed order and file the signed order in PDF/A format, and 5) allow a judge to notify the clerk’s office of data issues with a case (e.g. case should be inactive) to help with performance measures. Additionally, on May 3, 2018, the subcommittee recertified six vendors who are certified providers of CAPS in Florida: Mentis Technology Solutions; Pioneer Technology Group; Eighth; Thirteenth; Fifteenth; and Seventeenth Judicial Circuits.

When the CAPS systems were initially established, a fundamental decision was made that the CAPS would be used to view court files, receive and access information through the system, and have the ability to manage and work on the file through the CAPS. The Portal has a new functionality that allows the judiciary to receive, sign, and distribute orders via the Portal. With the CAPS having a distribution capability built into them, the subcommittee was tasked with determining what benefits the judiciary would gain by incorporating this functionality into the CAPS systems. This was out of the realm of the subcommittee’s work; therefore, a Judicial E-Filing Workgroup was created.
H. CMS Functional Standards Subcommittee

In May 2018, the CMS Functional Standards Subcommittee was formed to develop functional standards for clerks’ Case Maintenance Systems (“CMS”) to assure that such systems meet the needs of the judiciary and OSCA for the clerks’ court-related functions, the Florida Bar, and other partners. The subcommittee continues to review standards from the National Center for State Courts and will tailor those standards to the work that is done in Florida. The standards will include case initiation and indexing, docketing, scheduling, document management, calendaring, hearings, and dispositions to name a few. The subcommittee is hopeful to have a draft document for the Court’s consideration by next year.

I. Access Governance Board

The Access Governance Board (“Board”) continues to certify clerks of court online electronic records access systems. The clerks must submit an Online Electronic Records Access application; conduct a pilot program of at least 90 days to test compliance with the current version of the standards and matrix; and submit at least three-monthly status reports to the Office of the State Courts Administrator. After completing the pilot, the clerk of court is required to submit a certification letter to the Board certifying he/she is in compliance with the most recent version of the standards and matrix; provide a written description of the steps, processes, or tools used to validate compliance with the administrative orders; report all incidents of inadvertent release or unauthorized access to confidential information, if any occurred; certify that the clerk took the appropriate corrective actions necessary to address all reported incidents related to confidential information; and agree to incorporate changes to the standards and/or matrix into their existing online electronic records access system. As of March 2019, sixty counties have their online electronic records access system in production; three counties remain in their pilot phase (Lee, Pasco, and Seminole); and three counties do not provide online access (Holmes, Suwannee, and Taylor).

Through Administrative Order AOSC14-19, In re: Standards for Access to Electronic Court Records (amended May 23, 2014), the Supreme Court adopted the standards and the security matrix and subsequently amended the standards and security matrix in succeeding administrative orders. In November 2017, the Board received a request from the FCCC’s Technology Group to update the security matrix relating to mental health cases. Several mental health cases were excluded from the security matrix; thus, no security roles were attached. Based on statute, the Board modified the
matrix by adding Professional Guardian; Mental Health Miscellaneous; Substance Abuse Assessment/Treatment; and Tuberculosis/STD Treatment/Other Confidential case types. Furthermore, the Realigning of the Matrix and Standards Workgroup was established to revise and edit the standards and matrix to ensure the documents aligned with one another and reduce the need for interpretation. In previous iterations of the standards, several user groups were lumped into similar categories by statutory citations for access to specific types of records. The workgroup separated those user groups and made sure the user groups on the matrix and standards were synonymous. Additionally, the workgroup identified changes necessary to clarify electronic access processes, user agreements, and gatekeeper language. A gatekeeper was defined to clarify the role of an administrator. The User Maintenance section of the standards was updated to allow clerks who currently use an online process to register users to use their online electronic records access system as opposed to registered user agreements. The Supreme Court issued Administrative Order AOSC18-16, In re: Access to Electronic Court Records (June 21, 2018). Through this administrative order, the Court approved the clerks of court for Brevard, Monroe, and Wakulla counties to move their online electronic records access system out of the pilot phase into production and adopted the aforementioned changes to the standards and security matrix.

In March 2018, the Statewide Guardian ad Litem Office reached out to the Board to update the standards and matrix to add the Guardian ad Litem Program (“GAL”) to User Role 9, Florida Attorney General’s Office and the Florida Department of Children and Families (“DCF”), affording them the same level of access to juvenile dependency cases as DCF and the Attorney General’s Office. The GAL said section 39.502(8) authorizes and section 39.822(1), Florida Statutes, requires the court to appoint a GAL to represent the child in any child abuse, abandonment, or neglect judicial proceedings. The current version of the matrix and standards cite sections 39.0132(3) and (4)(a), Fla. Stat., as the relevant authority for access to records in dependency proceedings. This issue was addressed at four meetings of the Board and the FCTC. The Board and the FCTC recognized the importance of providing up-to-date, accurate reports and recommendations to judges and ultimately decided to add Guardian ad Litem appointed pursuant to Chapter 39 to the standards and security matrix affording the GAL the same level of access as the Attorney General’s Office and DCF. Because GAL will have unfettered access to juvenile dependency cases, the Board recommended
that each GAL office be required to establish policies to ensure that access to confidential records and information is limited to those individuals who require access in performance of their official duties.

In June 2018, FDLE reached out to the Board regarding agencies having multiple gatekeepers. The standards state, “In an effort to effectively manage access and ensure security, an agency may utilize a gatekeeper, who shall be an employee of that agency, for the purpose of adding, updating, and deleting user or agency information.” The language was being interpreted differently by some clerk’s offices. FDLE discussed the logistical challenges in managing gatekeeper agreements of users in individual units statewide. The Board created an Agency Supplemental Request Form (approved at the February 2019 FCTC meeting) to allow agencies to identify multiple gatekeepers. Additionally, the Gatekeeper language in the standards was updated to read, “In an effort to effectively manage access and ensure security, an agency may utilize one or more gatekeepers, or a designee authorized by an agency head or an authorized gatekeeper who shall be an employee of that agency, for the purpose of adding, updating, and deleting user or agency information.”

Moreover, in some online electronic records access systems, attorneys have access even after they are no longer the attorney of record. The Board recommended updating the Attorney of Record user role in the standards to denote an attorney’s access will be changed to registered user when the attorney’s appearance is terminated in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.505(f). The Board removed the requirement of a written notarized agreement to access electronic records for users who are Public in Clerk’s offices and Registered Users.

All issues are included in the Access to Electronic Court Records recommendations that will be submitted to the Supreme Court for approval. The FCTC is hopeful the recommendations will be approved, and an administrative order will be issued.

J. Technical Standards Subcommittee
The Technical Standards Subcommittee is comprised of court and clerk information technology experts who work on updating the technical standards. The subcommittee developed Backup of Electronic Records standards, Document Storage Format standards, and Filing Electronic Court
Documents standards. The subcommittee recommended PDF/A as the preferred document storage format. The subcommittee had several meetings with clerk and court technology staff and PDF vendors to discuss mandating PDF/A as the preferred document storage format. In May 2018, the FCTC endorsed the subcommittee’s recommendations regarding PDF/A: 1) the court work with the clerks and the FCCC so the record copy will be a PDF/A document which will retain the original intelligence and the redacted copy will not be required to maintain the original intelligence, 2) digital signatures and electronic notarization (or anything with a digital hash) are not required; however, if they are included in the PDF, the signatures may be flattened,1 and 3) clerks will have two years to implement PDF/A storage of court documents after the Supreme Court’s approval of technical requirements. Most clerks should be able to implement storage of documents in PDF/A format within two years if this mandate is combined with the initiative stated above for the Portal to begin converting received documents to PDF/A. If a clerk cannot meet the stated deadline, an extension request can be submitted for good cause shown to the Supreme Court. Clerks who have the capability to begin implementing PDF/A can move forward as some clerks have already started the process of PDF/A storage. Also, on May 11, 2018, the FCTC approved the Backup of Electronic Records standards. These standards are similar to the electronic filing standards that were approved by the Supreme Court in AOSC09-30 and subsequently updated to version 18.0. The subcommittee consulted with a leading information technology research consulting firm to review the backup of electronic records standards and provide feedback. The standards define the responsibilities of the custodians of the electronic court records; limitations on who should have access to the encryption key; location of production data, backup copy, and tertiary copy of the data; requirement of random sample testing performed annually to verify the data is accessible and recoverable; and requirement that physical and electronic data transfer processes conform to the confidentiality and security guidelines set forth in the Data Exchange Standards. In August 2018, the FCTC approved the Document Storage Format standards and the Filing Electronic Court Documents standards. The Document Storage Format standards requires all electronic court record custodians to be responsible for the storage, processing and accessibility of electronic court documents and shall ensure electronic court documents are stored in PDF/A format. The Filing Electronic Court Documents standards

1 Flattened is transforming an interactive PDF document to a non-interactive PDF document. When a PDF document is flattened, a user cannot modify the data in the document fields.
require the Portal to accept new filings in Word, WordPerfect, PDF, and PDF/A formats. The preferred format for filing is PDF/A where original document intelligence has been maintained. Documents filed through the Portal will be provided to the clerk in PDF/A format when the clerk is able to receive and store PDF/A documents.

The FCTC submitted the Storage and Backup of Electronic Court Records recommendations to the Supreme Court for approval. The FCTC is hopeful the recommendations will be approved, and an administrative order will be issued soon.

K. Cybersecurity Subcommittee
In October 2018, the Cybersecurity Subcommittee was formed to recommend minimum security standards and develop a standard security framework for the judicial branch. The subcommittee is comprised of a trial court judge, CTOs, clerk of court information technology staff, circuit network managers, and the Portal manager. One of the objectives of the subcommittee is to identify ways in which the FCTC can support the goal of preventing cybersecurity breaches through education. A Cybersecurity Review Workgroup was formed to begin compiling cybersecurity information necessary from the National Institute of Standards and Technologies (“NIST”) Cybersecurity Framework along with the Florida Cybersecurity Standards to develop an initial draft of objectives for the courts. The goals will be aligned with the Judicial Branch 2016-2021 Long Range Strategic Plan to safeguard the security, integrity, and confidentiality of court data and technology systems. To move forward, the subgroup will be identifying important features to include: 1) the court’s control regarding any county, clerk offices, and stakeholder’s systems, 2) protection of circuit inventories, 3) risks of exposure; 4) loss of data, and 4) any interruption of services by an attack. In establishing a security baseline, the subgroup will take into consideration counties that have less ability to implement security functions and may require additional resources. The subgroup anticipates having a draft outline in the coming months.

The Year Ahead
The Commission is steadfast in its mission to oversee and manage the development and use of advancing technology within the judicial branch. In the coming year, the Commission will continue the focus on technology initiatives affecting the judicial branch. These initiatives include 1)
propagating court policies and procedures to assist with the framework for a fully-automated trial court case management system; 2) developing functional standards for the court-related functions of the clerks’ case maintenance systems; 3) partnering with stakeholders to educate filers on saving and submitting documents to the Portal in PDF/A format; 4) collaborating with clerks to implement PDF/A as the preferred document storage format; 5) working with the RJAC to reconcile inconsistencies and modernize the rules given the evolution of the court system from the archaic paper world to the prevailing electronic world; and 6) updating the Court Technology Strategic Plan. With the collaboration and hard work of the varied membership of the Commission and its many justice partners, the Commission is honored to have the opportunity to build upon its tradition of success in the branch’s move toward a fully-functioning electronic court.