

Notice to Members of the Bar of Virginia

February 11, 2021

In response to the ongoing state of emergency occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic, both the Supreme Court of Virginia and the Court of Appeals of Virginia issued orders providing for e-filing on a temporary basis. Since that time, attorneys across the Commonwealth, as well as pro se litigants, have taken advantage of this opportunity to file pleadings in this more convenient, cost-effective, and often safer manner. Even before the onset of the pandemic, the two appellate courts had begun working on upgrades to the Virginia Appellate Courts Electronic System (“VACES”), which is the e-filing system utilized by the two courts.

The Supreme Court and Court of Appeals are pleased to announce that, effective February 16, 2021, an expanded and improved VACES will go into effect. While the Court of Appeals’ version of VACES will be similar to what litigants have been using during the current emergency, filers will see significant differences when filing with the Supreme Court (including requiring filers to classify their documents so that pleadings can be processed more efficiently and generating an electronic certificate to comply with Rule 5:17(i)). Both courts’ systems will offer a help menu for filers, and both will, for the first time, give litigants the ability to pay filing fees online, via credit cards.

Updated guidelines for the enhanced VACES will be posted no later than February 16. Please watch for these on the Supreme Court of Virginia’s web site. Due to the changes to VACES, attorneys are encouraged to factor in some additional time for filing until they are familiar with the new systems.

Questions concerning this notice may be directed to Douglas B. Robelen, Clerk, Supreme Court of Virginia, by emailing scvclerk@vacourts.gov (please reference “e-filing” in the subject line), or to Cynthia L. McCoy, Clerk, Court of Appeals of Virginia, by emailing cavbriefs@vacourts.gov (please reference “e-filing” in the subject line).