



## Access to Court Opinions Expands

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A pilot project giving the public free, text-searchable, online-access to court opinions now is available to all federal appellate, district and bankruptcy courts.

The Judicial Conference <sup>[1]</sup>, the policy-making body of the Federal court system, approved national implementation of the project with the Government Printing Office, Federal Digital System (FDsys), which provides free access to publications from all three branches of federal government via the Internet. The pilot project pulls opinions nightly from courts' Case Management/Electronic Case Files (CM/ECF) systems and sends them to the GPO, where they are processed and posted on the FDsys website <sup>[2]</sup>. The functionality to transfer opinions to FDsys is included in the latest release of CM/ECF which is now available to all courts. Twenty-nine courts participated in the original pilot, and now, all courts may opt to participate in the program.

Access to judicial opinions through FDsys allows the Judiciary to make its work more easily available to the public. Collections are divided into appellate, district or bankruptcy court opinions and are text-searchable across opinions and across courts. FDsys also permits embedded animation and audio.

Presently, more than 600,000 opinions dating back to 2004 are available. Opinions from the pilot are already one of the most heavily used collections on FDsys, with millions of retrievals each month.

**Related Topics:** E-Filing <sup>[3]</sup>

Judicial Conference of the United States <sup>[4]</sup>

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