



Electronic Court Filing Technical Committee

Court Policy Interface Requirements

Document Number

To be assigned

Current Version

Final Draft

Previous Version(s)

Concept Draft – June 21, 2002
Working Draft 1 – July 15, 2002
Working Draft 2 – September 30, 2002
Final Draft – October 14, 2002

Workgroup Information

Workgroup Name: OASIS LegalXML Court Filing Technical Committee
Workgroup Co-Chairs: John Greacen, Mary Campbell McQueen
Workgroup Mailing List:
Workgroup Mailing List Archive:

Document Author(s)

Donald L. Bergeron (Donald.Bergeron@lexisnexis.com)

Previous Author(s)

none

Document Editor(s)

Roger Winters (Roger.Winters@metrokc.gov)

Status

Final Draft of Requirements.

Abstract

This document describes the requirements for the Court Policy Interface (CPI), an integral part of the specifications developed by the Legal XML Court Filing Technical Committee for electronic court filing systems. It provides the basis for ensuring that the Court Policy Interface Specification will provide for all necessary aspects of court policy affecting electronic filing, so electronic filers and service providers can file successfully through compliance with those policies.

Context of Court Policy Interface

The Court Policy Interface (CPI) is a design element within the Legal XML Court Filing Technical Committee's specifications relating to court filings. Like other specifications, it is based in the principle of making its scope and content over-inclusive but optional. This principle is an important element in meeting the legitimate need for all involved with electronic filing (courts, parties, attorneys, prosecutors, and so forth) to know the expectations and/or constraints placed on the data elements and other aspects of a given electronic filing system. The principle of "over-inclusive but optional" is used throughout the Technical Committee's specifications. The data contained in the CPI of a given court will state the court's rules and administrative procedures (based on clerk's office procedures, judges' manuals, court rules, technical configuration of systems, and otherwise).

The Court Policy Interface XML for a given court is to be posted at one or more standard, stable location(s) by each court, to reflect and ensure compliance with the current policies, practices, and rules of that court. Past CPI versions are also to be retained as posted, to ensure support for ongoing cases for which prior rules would continue to apply. Another model to be explored as a method for communicating the details of Court Policy include use of the Query and Response specification and, in particular, its <getPolicy> query. Approaches similar to the Interface for Content Exchange (ICE) negotiation model or the Web Services Model may also be considered for this purpose.

Initial implementations of a Court Policy Interface XML document for given courts should help to reduce the scope of content models that must be supported within a court's DTDs or Schemas. The court's Court Policy will contain information about that court's particular "constants," which would include but not be limited to information about filing fees by class of action, document formats supported, hours of operation, and rules for determining official date/time of a filing.

The CPI document would not fully describe all of the rules and procedures of the given court. Its content would be limited to those items that relate to the court's acceptance of electronic filings, queries, and related matters, which are defined as requirements in this document.

A Court Policy Interface is a required component of the architecture needed for an electronic filing system. It may take time for a court to develop all of the elements its CPI needs to include in order to be fully compliant with the specifications, but compliance must be a goal for every court's electronic filing system. The particular circumstances of the court's systems and practices will help to determine how the Court Policy implementation will be achieved.

Court-initiated electronic filing transactions may be considered within the scope of the CPI even though the policies applicable to those types of court documents and filings might not be fully definable in this requirements document.

Goals of the Court Policy Interface

The principal purpose of the CPI is to reduce the need for human interactions between the courts and electronic filers and electronic filing service providers prior to the successful submittal of an electronic court filing. The interoperability needed in court filing systems to ensure their widespread use by litigants, firms, and service providers, will not come to pass if the great variety, number, and divergence in rules and procedures of the many court jurisdictions make electronic filing in multiple courts incompatible. Courts accepting filings electronically, based on Legal XML specifications, must be able to communicate their local policies and practices that affect the court's filing process, using a standardized CPI. In this way, variations on the standard electronic filing process that apply to a given court will be discovered in advance of attempts to submit filings, and errors based on a lack of information about those variations

will be avoidable. The result will be successful electronic court filings in multiple jurisdictions by the same filer, whether an individual, firm, or service provider.

To achieve this principle purpose, the CPI must contain information that provides for the features and functions described in this document as requirements. The CPI will communicate a court's electronic filing policies through a standardized Schema (or DTD) that complies with OASIS Legal XML Technical Committee specifications and W3C standards. A CPI should accomplish the following goals:

- Communicate the court's policies in a human-readable format, written so they will be understandable to a person who lacks formal legal training.
- Communicate the court's policies in a format which can be processed by a computer system designed to capture and interpret metadata used to enable or constrain an Electronic Filing Service Provider's (EFSP), Electronic Filing Manager (EFM) and other architectural components of the court's system without requiring involvement of an operator (except during initial development and fine-tuning of an application).
- Communicate the extensions and constraints defined by the individual court to express the extent of its compliance with the OASIS Legal XML Court Filing and related specifications.
- Communicate the extensions and constraints defined by the individual court to express the extent of its compliance with the Legal XML Court Document and related specifications.
- Communicate the extensions and constraints defined by the individual court to express the extent of its compliance with the Legal XML Court Forms and related specifications.
- Communicate the extensions and constraints defined by the individual court to express the extent of its compliance with the Query and Response and related specifications.
- Communicate the metadata needed by an Electronic Filing Provider to ensure it will comply with the rules and practices of the court in submitting electronic filings and performing related tasks.
- Communicate changes in pertinent court rules and procedures.
- Maintain the court's DTDs or Schemas properly and reliably, with version numbering and control, security, and persistent accessibility.

Specific Requirements of the Court Policy Interface

The requirements for the specification will be a reflection of the goals stated above. Each requirement identified in the specification shall be subject to testing.

Human Readability & Understandability

Communicate the court's policies in a human-readable format, written so they will be understandable to a person who lacks formal legal training.

These requirements are identified by a three-letter prefix, "PHR."

- PHR00001 – Identify which requirements W3C Schema constraints can more effectively handle in the clear communication of document schemas.
- PHR00002 – The CPI shall be human readable in the English language.
- PHR00003 - The CPI Document Schema shall be written in clear English and formatted using appropriate templates of the Technical Committee.
- PHR00004 - The CPI document instances shall be viewable in a variety of formats, to ensure clarity for those interested in understanding them in detail.
- PHR00005 - The CPI specifications shall be written in clear English and formatted using appropriate templates of the Technical Committee.
- PHR00006 - The CPI interface set shall work together cleanly.

Computer Processable

Communicate the court's policies in a format which can be processed by a computer system designed to capture and interpret metadata used to enable or constrain an Electronic Filing Service Provider's (EFSP), Electronic Filing Manager (EFM) and other architectural components of the court's system without requiring involvement of an operator (except during initial development and fine-tuning of an application).

These requirements are identified by a three-letter prefix of PCP.

- PCP00001 – Instructions and information shall be communicated in XML DTDs, Schemas, or as otherwise appropriate and necessary.

Court Filing Support

Communicate the extensions and constraints defined by the individual court to express the extent of its compliance with the OASIS Legal XML Court Filing and related specifications.

These requirements are identified by a three-letter prefix of PCF.

- PCF00001 – Indicate whether the court requires specific element(s) that are optional in the Court Filing specification.
- PCF00002 – Indicate whether the court refuses to accept certain specific element(s) that are optional in the Court Filing specification.
- PCF00003 – Indicate the extent of support for the Court Filing specification's list of a courts' specific document titles.
- PCF00004 - Indicate the extent of support for the Court Filing specification's list of Party roles.
- PCF00005 - Indicate the extent of support for the Court Filing specification's list of Filing types and categories.
- PCF00006 - Indicate the extent of support for the Court Filing specification's list of causes of actions and other case type and level identifiers.
- PCF00007 - Indicate the extent of support for the Court Filing specification's list of courts available to receive electronic filings through the particular system.
- PCF00008 - Indicate the extent of support for the Court Filing specification's list of Court locations.
- PCF00009 - Indicate the extent of support for the Court Filing specification's list of EFSP names.
- PCF00010 - Indicate the extent of support for the Court Filing specification's list of Courts available for documents to be filed, Case number format (and other CDC details), describing how the CPI is coordinated with CDC and the court's Case Management System.

Court Document Support

Communicate the extensions and constraints defined by the individual court to express the extent of its compliance with the Legal XML Court Document and related specifications.

These requirements are identified by their three-letter prefix of PCD.

- PCD00001 – Indicate whether the court requires specific element(s) that are optional in the DTD.
- PCD00002– Indicate whether the court refuses to accept certain specific element(s) that are optional in the DTD

Court Based Forms Support

Communicate the extensions and constraints defined by the individual court to express the extent of its compliance with the Legal XML Court Forms and related specifications.

These requirements are identified by the three-letter prefix of PCF.

- PCF00001 – Indicate whether the court requires specific element(s) that are optional in the DTD

- PCF00002 – Indicate whether the court refuses to accept certain specific element(s) that are optional in the DTD

Query-Response Support

Communicate the extensions and constraints defined by the individual court to express the extent of its compliance with the Query and Response and related specifications.

These requirements are identified by the three-letter prefix of PQR.

- PQR00001 – Indicate conditions for accepting standard queries, including requirements such as pre-registration or fee payment.
- PQR00002 – Indicate all limits on the terms and arguments available for a query.
- PQR00003 – Indicate limits on the number of queries allowed, for example, in a time period, and describe other restrictions that apply.
- PQR00004 – List the supported data elements that can be returned in response to a standard query
- PQR00005 – Indicate the location of the Court Data Configuration (CDC) specification or a successor location for the information expected from it.
- PQR00006 – Indicate how access rights are determined based on the rules of the court.
- PQR00007 – Identify security privilege levels and how they are to be accessed.

Court Rules & Administration Support

Communicate the metadata needed by an Electronic Filing Provider to ensure it will comply with the rules and practices of the court in submitting electronic filings and performing related tasks.

These requirements are identified by the three-letter prefix of PRA.

- PRA00001 – Show the schedule of fees.
- PRA00002 – Show the procedures for Automated Clearing House / Debit cards use and required metadata.
- PRA00003 – Describe constraints on Credit Card use and required metadata.
- PRA00004 – Describe processes for EFP escrow account use and required metadata.
- PRA00005 – Describe uses of court-specified documents.
- PRA00007 – Indicate whether the court accepts a URL as a document.
- PRA00008 – Indicate whether the court accepts case-initiating documents.
- PRA00009 – Indicate whether the court accepts documents requiring fee payments.
- PRA00010 – Indicate whether the court accepts sealed documents.
- PRA00011 – Indicate whether the court restricts electronic filing, for example, to one filing per envelope.
- PRA00012 – Indicate whether the court has set a maximum size for the court filing envelope.
- PRA00013 – Describe the court's use of element data typing.
- PRA00014 – Describe the court's requirements, if any, regarding maximum element data length and size.
- PRA00015 – Describe any constraints on the relationship between elements.
- PRA00016 – Describe any constraints on attributes within elements.
- PRA00017 – Describe any value constraints on elements.
- PRA00018 – Describe any value constraints on attributes.
- PRA00019 – Describe any date constraints on elements.
- PRA00020 – Describe any date constraints on attributes.
- PRA00021 – Describe the court's policies regarding determination of non-receipt of attempted filings.
- PRA00022 – Describe the court's policies regarding received filings that are corrupted.
- PRA00023 – Describe the court's policies regarding incomplete filings.

- PRA00024 – Describe the court's policies on unpaid fees for filing.
- PRA00025 – Describe the court's policies on rejection of filings.
- PRA00026 – Describe the court's policies on official receipt of filings.
- PRA00027 – Describe the court's policies on accepting filings.
- PRA00028 – Describe the court's policies on communication of court orders.
- PRA00029 – Describe any pre-qualifications for filers.
- PRA00030 – Describe any pre-qualifications for EFPs.
- PRA00031 – Describe how virus screening and protection is provided for.
- PRA00032 – Describe the court's policies on electronic signatures.
- PRA00033 – Describe the court's policies on use of encryption.
- PRA00034 – Describe the court's policies on document formats supported by the court for electronic filing.
- PRA00035 – Communicate the court's accepted communication protocols.
- PRA00036 – Describe the court's policies on accepting documents containing macros, controls (e.g., ActiveX), locks, and the like.
- PRA00037 – Describe whether and how style sheets are supported by the court.
- PRA00038 – Describe whether and how the court requires use of forms and pattern forms.
- PRA00039 – Describe how the court treats elements and documents that might need to be tagged for redaction or subject to similar controls.
- PRA00040 – Describe the court's policies on data values and data relationships relative to the court's CDC specification.
- PRA00041 – Describe the court's requirements regarding length and size of data and documents, as described in the Court's CDC specification.
- PRA00042 – Ensure the court's CDC and Court Policy specifications are maintained in coordinated and reconciled form at all times.
- PRA00043 – Describe how lead documents and attachments are handled within a filing and in XML court documents.
- PRA00044 – Communicate the court's policies affecting configuration of document objects.
- PRA00045 – Communicate any policies related to formatting, including margins and font use.
- PRA00046 – Communicate which protocols are supported by the court, e.g., https, SOAP, Web services.

Access and Notice Support

Communicate changes in pertinent court rules and procedures.

These requirements are identified by their three-letter prefix of PAN.

- PAN00001 – Ensure stable Web-based electronic access point for Court Policy.
- PAN00002 – Ensure mechanism for updates and notices for users and EFPs for rechecking policies.
- PAN00003 – Provide registration of "I Care" for Filers push model and websites.
- PAN00004 – Provide registration of "I Care" for EFP push model and websites.
- PAN00005 – Provide push of policy to registered "I Care" for Public Notice Locations.
- PAN00006 – Provide push of policy to registered "I Care" for Filers.
- PAN00007 – Provide push of policy to registered "I Care" for EFP.
- PAN00008 – Declare relationships to Web services and appropriate registries and directories.
- PAN00009 – Define repository for policy documentation and codes.
- PAN00010 – Declare relationship to EBXML collaboration protocols.
- PAN00011 – Declare relationship to UDDI.
- PAN00012 – Declare relationship to WSDL.

Changes to DTDs and Schemas Supporting Court Filing

Maintain the court's DTDs or Schemas properly and reliably, with version numbering and control, security, and persistent accessibility.

These requirements are identified by their three-letter prefix of MDS.

- MDS00001 – Maintain DTD or Schema Version Numbering.
- MDS00002 - Maintain DTD or Schema Security.
- MDS00003 - Maintain DTD or Schema Persistence of access.

Conformance Levels & Requirements Assigned to Each Level

This section will be developed based on discussions on the overall approach to be taken with the design. The results of those discussions will give a better framework for the specific requirements for this section. The requirements shall be included in the specification adopted prior to the beginning of interoperability testing of the Court Policy Interface specification.