



# JUDICIARY

## THE BAHAMAS

NASSAU, THE BAHAMAS

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## **Bahamas Supreme Court Launches Electronic Filing and Case Management Systems**

The Supreme Court of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas is proud to announce the launch of the court's first unified, nationwide electronic filing system that benefits all participants in the court system. The new system, called Folio e-filing, went live on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at a launch at the Chief Justice's Chambers in Nassau.

The Judiciary is committed to applying technology that enables everyone, regardless of means, to access our justice system. The implementation, part of the roll out of the Curia Court Management System at the court, will allow for the first time in the Bahamas, e-filing of cases that come before the Supreme Court.

Attorneys immediately took advantage of the new service, with over 50 cases filed electronically in the first two days of the system's availability. A large number of users from across the legal community have been registered and trained on Folio e-filing system, along with court staff members who are expected to use the new system daily.

The Curia system delivers increased transparency and court availability to attorneys, litigants, and court representatives, creating a more efficient court system and use of staff time. It will be fully accessible 24 hours a day, every day of the week from any Internet accessible location.

The Supreme Court handles more than 15,000 filings a year. The new electronic filing service is expected to save the court both time and money and fundamentally change how the courts do business.

Deploying the new electronic filing and case management systems involved many participants, including the Caribbean Agency for Justice Solutions (CAJS), a regional institution dedicated to the modernization of court systems in the Caribbean. CAJS carefully guided the project and provided clear direction to the court. The Government of The Bahamas also played a vital role by supporting the initiative with necessary funding.

The exercise which took just under one year to implement, leveraged past efforts to digitize court records. In the final stage before launch, the CAJS team trained court personnel and attorneys to ensure that e-filing proceeds as smoothly as possible.

"The Bahamas is now on the way to having a 21st century Judiciary. We have devoted much time and effort to educating people about the new system. As e-filing gets up and rolling, we believe this will be a win-win situation for everybody. This is merely the beginning as we will move quickly to expand this

service to the other Courts in the Judiciary. I particularly wish to thank my implementation team within the Judiciary, made of Justice of Appeal Bernard Turner, Justice Andrew Forbes, Registrar Constance Delancy, Court Services Director Renaldo Toote, Assistant Registrars Rosanne Sweeting and Indy Hunter and our consultant Mr. Drazen Komarica. The team worked tirelessly with CAJS, led by its Executive Director, Mr. Bevil Wooding and Chief Technology Officer, Mr. Richard Wall, to get us to this point." said Chief Justice Sir Ian Winder.

"Many people and entities played key roles in the success of our e-filing project. We were particularly grateful for the expertise of and partnership with The Caribbean Agency for Justice Solutions. With their leadership role in the implementation of the process, we were able to launch the new systems ahead of schedule and under budget. Now Bahamians can benefit from improved service and a more effective legal process."

"CAJS is proud to play a part in such an important initiative. We look forward to furthering the collaboration with the Judiciary to expand the delivery of electronic services to other areas and to further enhance efficiencies across the judicial system." said Executive Director of the Caribbean Agency for Justice Solutions, Mr. Bevil Wooding.

At a lunch of the new systems in the Chief Justice's chambers in Nassau, Sir Ian noted several benefits to e-filing. Among them:

- Electronic filing allows judges, attorneys, litigants and court staff to file and access documents electronically via the Internet, 365 days a year, seven days a week.
- Documents can be filed or accessed in any location, at any time, and with basic equipment and basic computer knowledge.
- Multiple parties, including judges, attorneys, court personnel or litigants, can access documents at the same time.
- Electronic filing services will incur the same fees that were incurred with paper documents.
- Electronic filing is ecologically friendly and will greatly reduce the vast amount of paperwork generated by the courts.
- Electronic filing will help the courts operate with increased efficiency that will directly affect attorneys and their clients.

More information will be available through various publications and on the Judicial Branch's website, at [www.courts.bs](http://www.courts.bs)



**Front Row** (l to r): CAJS Chief Technology Officer, Richard Wall; CAJS Executive Director, Bevil Wooding; Chief Justice Sir Ian Winder; Justice of Appeal Bernard Turner

**Back Row** (l to r): Assistant Registrar Indy Hunter, Consultant Drazen Komarica, Court Services Director Renaldo Toote, CAJS Engagement Director, Junior McIntyre, CAJS Artificial Intelligence Advisor, Kevin Khelaw an

Photo Credit: The Bahamas Judiciary