# Update June 18, 2014

The Supreme Court of Texas has adopted an updated ***Technology Standards*** for efiling that are aimed at "creating uniformity and consistency" across the State's various jurisdictions.  This means that all jurisdictions will have similar filing types and filing codes.  Hopefully the drop down windows for Houston, Dallas, Bexar, etc. will have the identical selections. You can access the Standards from our log in screen; just select **here** at the bottom right of the text (see arrow below).



This will open a calendar by jurisdiction indicating when the jurisdiction will convert, "go live", to the new standards.  Select Learn More about the JCIT Technology Standards to open the Court's actual Order or go to:

http://efiletexas.gov/active-courts/jcit-standards.htm

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Notes on the Sections:

**Section 3 Digital Media** This is a reiteration of the original standards in Rule 21. Review the standards again, just to make sure; there are only 6.

**Section 4  Digital Signatures** Applies to digital signatures. Remember that the original Rule 21.f.6.A allows "electronic signatures" using "/S/".

**Section 5 eFiling Filing Configurations** This section lists the filing codes and types that "**must be accepted** in each court". "Courts and clerks **may not add to** this configuration, but may eliminate codes if not needed in a particular jurisdiction". *Hopefully this is where the uniformity and consistency come in*.

The case categories are:

Child Support
Civil
Family/Juvenile
Probate and Mental Health

*Category & Code* configurations address <u>original petition efilings</u> and the **Case Information** screen drop down window options. You are informing the jurisdiction of the reason for the suit. Example:

Category:   Civil-Contract        Code: Debt/Contract- Consumer/DTPA or,
                                                 Code:  Landlord/Tenant

*Type* configurations primarily address <u>subsequent efilings</u> and the **Filing** screen drop down window (*Select Filing Code*). Example:

Type:  Answer/Contest/Response

NOTE: These standards will change your procedure for efiling original petitions in Civil and Family cases.

Jurisdiction filing fees are "paid" in the **Filing** Screen**.**  Currently, you "pay" the case origination fee with your first selection *Select Filing Code.*  Under the new structure your *Select Filing Code* for an original petition will only be "Petition".

You will have to "pay" the origination fee from the **Optional Services** drop down window.  This is the same window that you currently pay for citation, service copies and service of citation fees.  Example below:

**Section 5.6.1** <u>**Acceptance of Documents Tendered for Filing**</u>  This identifies the 2 reasons an efiled document can be "Rejected", 1) Sealed Documents (cannot be efiled) and 2) Vexatious Litigant.

**Section 5.6.2** <u>**Request for Correction**</u>  *Remember* that the original Rule 21 stated that a document is "deemed filed when transmitted to the filing party's" EFSP (f.5).  The problem arises when Clerks return efilings as "Rejected" for procedural reasons (interface with the Clerk's  Case Management System).

First, this section aligns 1) the efiler's  "deemed filed when"  with 2) the jurisdiction's Case Management System requirements by introducing "Return for Correction".  This allows the date of the original efiling to be retained.

NOTE:  Currently you will have to recreate your efiling as a new envelope and reference the original envelope number in order to preserve your original efiling date.  The State's EFM, eFilingTexas.gov, is scheduled to release an updated version, 3.8, in August that will "make this process easier"!

Second, this section establishes universal and consistent rules/reasons for allowing the Clerks to employ "Returns for Correction" against an efiling.

NOTE: How much this will prevent arbitrary differences between jurisdiction remains to be seen.