



NH e-Court Capital Budget Appropriation Request

State of NH Biennial Budget for FY22/23

Funding the Future of e-Justice in New Hampshire

Prepared for:

House Public Works and Highways Committee

February 26, 2021

What is the Purpose of NH e-Court?

- NH e-Court exists to ensure the NHJB leverages modern technology to enable Access to Justice

NHJB Mission

To preserve the rule of law and protect the rights and liberties guaranteed by the United States and New Hampshire Constitutions, the courts will provide accessible, prompt, and efficient forums for the fair and independent administration of justice, with respect for the dignity of all we serve.



NH e-Court Vision

NH e-Court exists to support the NHJB Access to Justice mission by using technology to:

- Break down procedural barriers
- Build trust and confidence in the justice system, and
- Ensure our courts and justice system remain viable and relevant in the twenty-first century and beyond



How Does NH e-Court Help People During the Pandemic?

- Case in Point:

The “Unintended Benefits” of an Electronic Court

- All court locations remained operational
- Court filings continue during facility access restrictions
 - NH Superior – 10,730 e-filed cases (civil and criminal)
 - NH Circuit – 23,800 e-filed cases (Small Claims, Guardianships, Estates, and other civil case types)

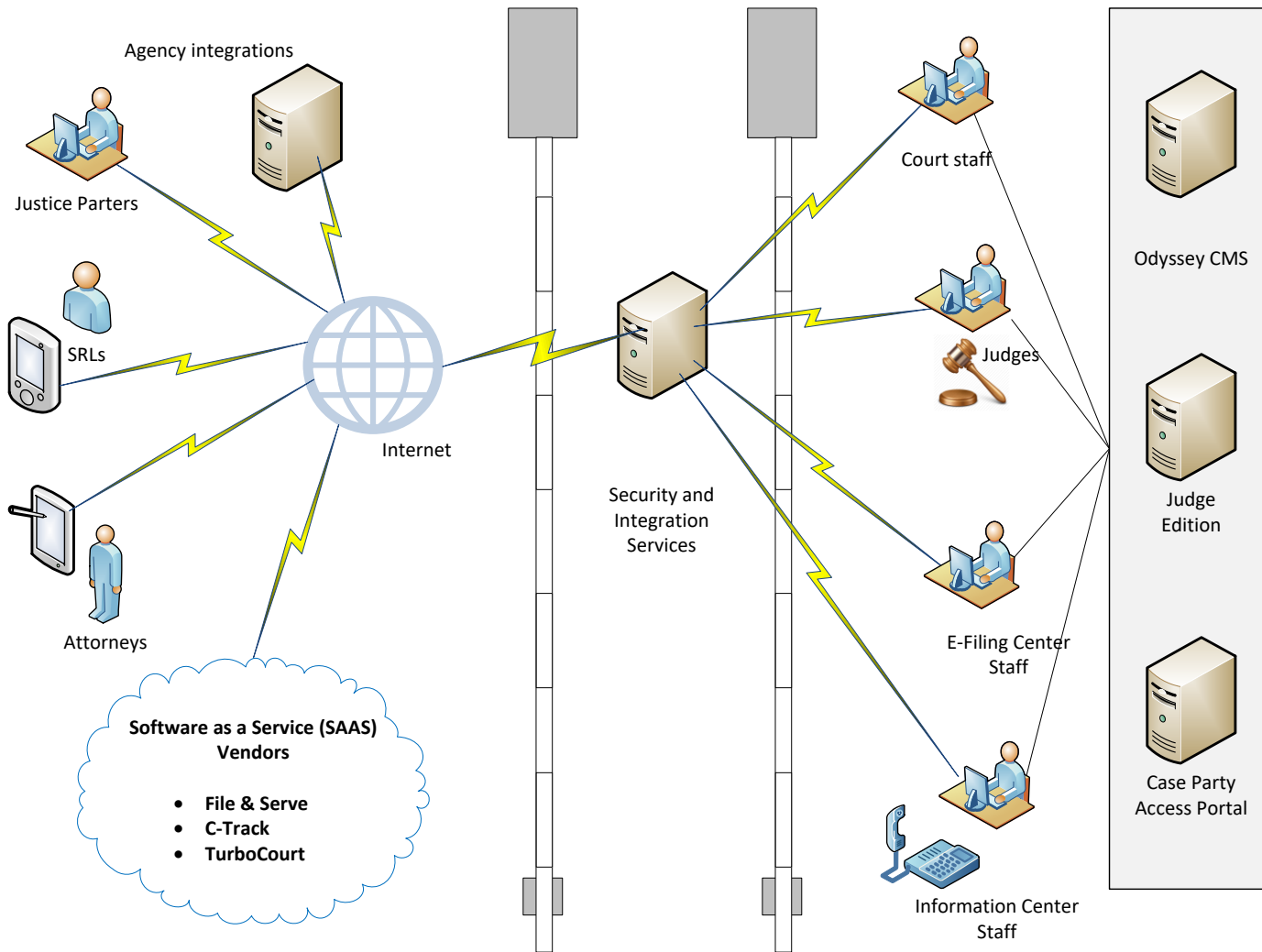
Reduced on-premises activity = greater safety for all

- Staff, attorneys, and judges continued court operations while working remotely on electronic cases
- Work is more easily reallocated among staff and judges when quarantine and illness impact staffing levels

What is NH e-Court?

- NH e-Court is a comprehensive **technology platform** that automates adjudication processes administered by the NH Judicial Branch to fulfill its constitutional responsibilities to ensure full access to the courts
- NH e-Court is also a set of **software-based services** that NH citizens expect from modern government
- The NH e-Court Program is a **strategic management approach** that plans and organizes technology initiatives that collectively provide substantial benefits to New Hampshire citizens who interact with the court system

Conceptual Diagram of NH e-Court



What are the Benefits of NH e-Court?

- NH e-Court provides **technology solutions** that:
 - Increase litigant engagement throughout the lifecycle of every case
 - Build trust by improving litigants' overall court experience
 - Decrease or eliminate process barriers such that parties are better able to focus on fair and timely dispute resolution
 - Provide access to public information while appropriately protecting confidentiality
 - Drive operational efficiency by:
 - Improving staff productivity
 - Reducing or eliminating paper-based processes
 - Using technology solutions that reduce reliance on physical environments

NH e-Court by the Numbers

- The NH e-Court Program has delivered at least one **successful project** every year since 2012
- Since the first case type (Small Claims) was converted to electronic filing in 2014, **over 136,000 cases** have been filed in the NH Supreme, Superior, and Circuit Courts

Data point: Since inception, NH e-Court has handled *nearly 1.8 million electronic documents*. This means *millions* of sheets of paper have not been purchased, printed, mailed, filed, stored, archived, shredded, and sent to landfills.

- Pre-COVID, Time to Disposition *dropped* between 8% and 72%, depending on the Circuit Court e-filed case type

How has the Pandemic Impacted the NH e-Court Program?

The “Pandemic Pivot”

- Projects planned for FY2021 are on hold
- Projects delivered/in-progress in response to emergency orders:
 - Create a Mobile Workforce:
 - Substantial improvements to the Virtual Private Network
 - Laptops and related hardware/software to staff and judges
 - Launch Virtual Court
 - Introduced WebEx to support remote hearings: Software, staff/judge training, filer support, “purpose-built” WebEx devices
 - *12,000+ hours* spent on video conferences involving *77,000+ Participants* to date

Why does NH e-Court Require Additional Capital Funds?

- The state's capital investments are critical to improving the quality of life in NH through **infrastructure development and maintenance**.
- Technology innovation (a key NHJB objective) requires *infrastructure* that must be built and expanded
 - Technology evolves: It is not a “one and done” proposition
- NH e-Court is the **only technology innovation program** in NHJB
- Without NH e-Court, NHJB technology would remain “*status-quo*”
 - Technology rapidly becomes obsolete; “**Status-quo**” **reverses technological gains**
 - When technology innovation stops, **organizational capabilities shrink** over time
 - **Technological obsolescence** creates “technical debt”: Future technology expenditures required to remedy obsolescence *are more expensive*

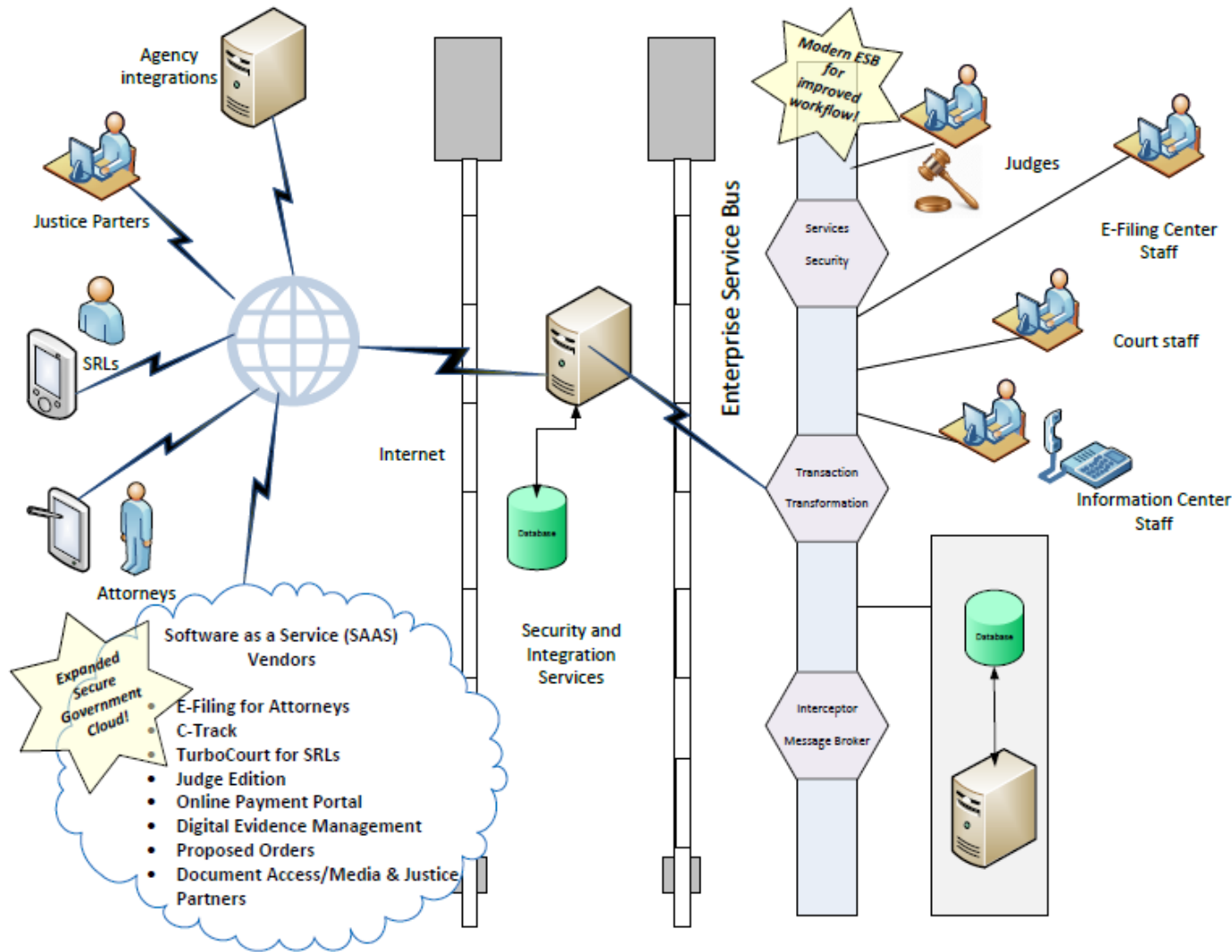
How Will NH e-Court Invest \$1.4 million of Additional Funding?

Introducing NH e-Court 2.0

Multi-year, Three-point Strategic Plan that will:

1. Build **new software solutions** to help NH citizens:
 - Understand their legal issues and find support when necessary
 - Pay fines in a timely and equitable manner
 - Access court case information more securely and conveniently
 - Settle disputes fairly, with greater ease, and in less time
 - Reduce tangible expenses (paper, printing, mailing, storing, travel, day care, lost worktime, and hardship imposed by delayed justice)
2. Plan and **prepare for the Future now**: Procure a modern, more flexible case management system
3. Ensure the NHJB **maximizes its technology investments** by maintaining its current infrastructure

The Future of NH e-Court





Appendix

Accomplishments

Case Counts

Time to Disposition

NH e-Court 2.0 Summary

Budget Allocation per Biennium

Cumulative Budget verses Spend

What has NH e-Court Accomplished?

- Added Value Every Year Since 2012

Project	Completion Date
Transcripts available online	March 2012
Trial court Info Center opens	June 2012
Jury Management System(JMS) launched	August 2013
Small Claims e-Filing begins	July 2014
Guardianship e-Filing begins	June 2015
M/V Case Data Exchange expanded	August 2015

Project	Completion Date
Estates e-Filing begins	May 2017
Case Party Access Portal launched	December 2017
Supreme Court e-Filing begins	August 2018
Superior Court Civil e-Filing begins	September 2018
Superior Court Criminal e-Filing begins	September 2019
Circuit Civil/Name Change e-Filing begins	February 2020
Branch-wide upgrade: All PCs and laptops	January 2021

NH e-Court Case Counts

- Total Cases e-Filed from Launch Date thru 11/2020

Court	Case Type	Launch Date	Total – Nov. 2020
Circuit	Small Claims	July 2014	77,364
Circuit	Guardianship	June 2015	11,925
Circuit	Estates	May 2017	22,590
Supreme	Appellate	August 2018	1,526
Superior	Civil	September 2018	11,458
Superior	Criminal	September 2019	9,708
Circuit	Civil/Name Change	February 2020	2,191
Total			136,762

Data point: Since inception, NH e-Court has handled *nearly 1.8 million electronic documents*. This means millions of sheets of paper have not been purchased, printed, mailed, filed, stored, archived, and sent to landfills.

Reduced Time to Disposition

NH e-Court **has transformed centuries-old paper-based processes** into streamlined, automated electronic work and data flows, resulting in:

- Reductions in Time to Disposition
 - Small Claims – 22% Decrease
 - Guardianship of a Minor Person – 37% Decrease
 - Guardianship of a Minor Person & Estate or Estate Only – 72% Decrease
 - Guardianship of an incapacitated individual – 9% Decrease
 - Wills & Estates – 8% Decrease

Statistics reflect pre-pandemic activity.

NH e-Court 2.0 Focus Area #1

Build New Technology Solutions

Project Examples	Description
Digital Evidence Management	Cloud-hosted, Software As A Service (SAAS) solution that enables case parties to share digital evidence in an organized and secure manner. This functionality is especially important during remote hearings and other court proceedings.
WebEx Mobile Units	Purpose-built hardware devices that enable every NH courtroom to run “virtually.”
Online Payment Portal	3 rd party service that provides litigants with flexible payment options.
Expanding the Digital Courtroom	Migrate old courtroom recording and transcripts technology to cloud-based services.
Proposed Orders	Proposed orders are fundamental to many case types. NH e-Court systems are not designed for their unique requirements. Creating an electronic proposed order solution will enable additional case types that rely heavily on this pleading type to proceed.
Online document sharing for NHJB justice partners and the media	Replacement and expansion of the current Odyssey Portal to include secure document sharing for police and the media.
"Self-service" Case Summaries Using Odyssey Portal	Expand Portal for general public access to Case Summaries (relieves the Information Center from fulfilling these requests).
Guided Interviews/e-filing for family case types.	Additional electronic filing for case types with the greatest number of self-represented litigants.

NH e-Court 2.0 Focus Area #2

Prepare for the Future Now

- The primary NH e-Court system is Odyssey, the statewide case management system (CMS)
- It is approaching **twenty years old**, and is built on an outdated architecture
- The **negative impacts** of an outdated CMS are:
 - Expensive to maintain; limited functionality compared to modern systems
 - Not extensible or flexible; new features and functionality take more time and cost more money than necessary
 - NHJB is limited to only what the CMS vendor can provide
 - These solutions often do not meet NHJB needs

How is NH e-Court 2.0 Preparing for the Future?

- Build out the **Service Oriented Architecture** via the Enterprise Service Bus (ESB)
 - Supports the Court Component Model recommended by the National Center for State Courts
 - Flexibility and extensibility are intrinsic to the ESB design
- “Build out” means to **develop and test the software “connectors”** that enable the rapid development of “front-end” solutions such as:
 - Secure document sharing
 - Fully integrated “judge’s bench” with automated internal and external workflows
 - Easy integration with payment processors that service electronic transactions for the NHJB
- This “pre-work” will **ready NHJB to replace an outdated CMS** with modern technology in a cost-effective manner

NH e-Court 2.0 Focus Area #3

Maintain Current Systems

- A component of the NH e-Court 2.0 strategy that is **not funded with capital money**
- It is included in the Strategic Plan to **ensure other NHJB resources** are allocated to necessary maintenance projects
- Routine software maintenance schedules ensure systems **remain on current release versions** for cybersecurity management and to qualify for ongoing vendor support



Budget Allocation Per Biennium – FY12-19

Program Phases	Cumulative Expense – Actual
7/1/2011 – 6/30/2013 (FY12-13)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Enterprise Architecture ✓ Infrastructure ✓ Management Consulting 	\$ 729,347
7/1/2013 – 6/30/2015 (FY14-15)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Small Claims e-filing ✓ Guardianship e-filing 	\$ 2,880,527
7/1/2015 – 6/30/2017 (FY16-17)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Estates e-filing ✓ Case Party Access Portal ✓ Supreme Court Attorney e-filing and Public Access 	\$ 4,145,388
7/1/2017 – 6/30/2019 (FY18-19)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Supreme Court Attorney e-filing and Public Access ✓ Superior Court Judge’s electronic case management for e-filed cases ✓ Superior Court Civil e-filing ✓ TurboCourt Enhancements for self-represented litigants ✓ Circuit Court Other Civil e-filing ✓ Superior Court Criminal e-filing ✓ Supreme Court Self-represented Litigant e-filing ✓ Circuit Court Judge’s electronic case management for e-filed cases ✓ Circuit Court e-Court Enabled Courtrooms ✓ TurboCourt Enhancements for self-represented litigants ➤ Odyssey Case Management System Upgrade 	\$6,662,459
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Completed ➤ In progress 	



Budget Allocation Per Biennium – FY20-23

Program Phases	Cumulative Expense – Actual/ <i>Planned</i>
7/1/2019 – 6/30/2021 (FY20-21)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Odyssey Case Management System Upgrade ➤ NH e-Court 2.0 Enterprise Architecture Improvements ➤ WebEx Mobile Units 	\$7,556,195¹/ <i>\$8,059,309</i>
7/1/2021 – 6/30/2023 (FY22-23)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ File & Serve 2019 Upgrade and AWS Cloud Releases ▪ Digital Evidence Management - Superior Court ▪ Online Payment Portal for Fines ▪ e-Filing in the NH Circuit Court (Family, Juvenile, Adoption, etc.) ▪ Cloud Services for Digital Courtroom Record & Transcripts <p>NH e-Court 2.0:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proposed Orders for Trial Courts ▪ Document Portal (to replace Case Party Access Portal) ▪ NH e-Court 2.0 - Enterprise Review Queue Phase 1 ▪ Begin Odyssey Case Management System Procurement ▪ Modernize Systems Integration with State Police (“J-One”) 	\$10,542,232²

¹ As of 11/30/20

² Assumes full \$1.4m appropriation request is approved

- In progress
 - Planned



Cumulative Budget vs. Spend

