

County to join court database system

Public case information available free to public

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Madison County courts are expected to join a free statewide database today, allowing anyone to access updates to public cases as soon as the court enters the information.

“This should save trips and calls to the courthouse,” said Mary DePrez, director of trial court technology for the Indiana Supreme Court.

The county will become the 18th county in Indiana to join the Odyssey Statewide Case Management System, and system managers say it will enable more than just attorneys, judges and public agencies to stay abreast of cases.

“The information available to the public is in real time, and there is no delay once the court or clerk makes an entry into Odyssey,” DePrez said.

Courthouse staff members were not allowed to enter any information in the system Friday, as the information from the previous database — New World — was converted to the Odyssey system.

DePrez said she doesn't expect any complications, and information from as far back as 1968 should be available today. Along with helping with internal courthouse operations, the system will enable citizens to access the case database through “my-case.in.gov.”

For the public, DePrez said, it will be useful in checking on traffic ticket hearing dates, looking up tax warrants, following criminal cases and keeping up with small-claims cases.

DePrez and David Remondini, chief deputy executive director of the high court's state court administration, offered scenarios wherein the system can be useful.

Remondini said an attorney in a county that has already switched to the Odyssey system told him a story of using the system to find lawsuits against a contractor across the state. Apparently, Remondini said, the attorney was representing a client who wanted to also sue the contractor.

“The uses are plenty,” he said.

The Odyssey system is part of efforts by the Indiana Supreme Court to improve state court computerization. In 2002, the court created the Judicial Technology and Automation Committee (JTAC) to head such projects.