

## New York's Online Resources



**By William T. McCaffery**

One of the most useful resources available to anyone who handles claims in New York is the website offered by the New York State Unified Court System. The homepage for the court's website can be found at [www.nycourts.gov](http://www.nycourts.gov) and there is no charge for its use. From the homepage, users can access a number of different useful links, including court rules, an attorney directory, judicial profiles, and court publications. Perhaps the most useful resource on the court's website, however, is what is called "e-Courts."

E-Courts allows users access to cases that have been filed in most of the courts in New York State, whether the case is pending in a local court, family court, housing court, criminal court or, of course, civil court. Most civil actions are brought in the New York Supreme Court and there is a Supreme Court for each county in the state. Users can search for cases by index number or party name. Searches can also be performed by name of the attorney or law firm handling the case or even by the judge assigned to the case.

Generally, cases can be found on e-Courts once a Request for Judicial Intervention has been filed. Accordingly, cases in their very early stages may not be found on the website. However, for the vast majority of cases that can be found on e-Courts, once the case is found in the system, the website provides a wealth of information, such as the county in which the case is pending, the parties to the action, the parties' attorneys, the judge assigned to the case, a calendar of all court appearances for the case (past, present, and future), as well as a complete list of motions made in the case and, often, scanned copies of orders issued by the court on the case (orders that resolve motions and sometimes other court issued orders, such as discovery scheduling orders).

Not only can e-Courts be searched to find information on pending cases, but the site also offers a useful and convenient service called "e-Track," which is also a free service provided by the court. E-Track allows a user to register for an account. Once an account is opened, the registered user can add specific cases to the account, which provides the user with centralized access to all of his/her cases. Perhaps more important than centralized access to the user's cases, is the "case update" feature provided by e-Track. Once a case has been added to an e-Track user's account, anytime there is a development in that case, such as a motion being filed, or a court conference scheduled, or a decision issued on a motion, the user will receive an e-Courts "alert" by email advising the user of the new development. This service provides virtual real-time notice of developments in cases, which avoids the need to continuously monitor cases and court calendars.

E-Track also offers a feature which allows for “appearance reminders.” Once a case has been added to a user’s e-Track account, the user is offered the option to receive reminders of upcoming court dates. The appearance reminders can be set for anywhere between thirty days before an appearance and one day before an appearance. This feature is a useful asset in helping prevent court dates from slipping through the cracks of a calendar system.

Not only does New York’s e-Courts system allow users to access information about cases pending in the lower courts of the state, but the website also allows users to access information about cases pending in all of the appellate courts of the state. In particular, the court’s website offers access to the appellate courts’ calendars, which enables users to find motion dates, submission dates, and oral argument dates. The appellate calendar also provides the names of the judges that will preside over each case. The website also releases electronic copies of the appellate courts’ decisions on motions on a daily basis and likewise publishes the courts’ appellate decisions on the day they are rendered. These postings provide users with immediate copies of decisions, both on appeals and appellate motions, on the same day they are issued by the court.

While the court’s website presently offers a great deal of useful information, the resources available will only continue to increase with time. The courts are slowly beginning to implement mandatory e-filing and, as a result, it is expected that every filed court paper will ultimately be available online. Such is presently the case for actions pending in the Commercial Division of the Supreme Court, New York County, among others.

The website provided by the New York State Unified Court System is a useful asset not just to the attorneys who practice in the state, but it is an asset to insurance claims professionals, litigants, and anyone else who has an interest in any case pending before the New York courts. Claims professionals

and others can gain easy access to all cases they have pending before the New York courts and easily register with the court’s website to receive real-time updates of all significant developments in their cases.

While there are dozens of useful links on the court’s website, here are a few key links for easy reference:

- [New York State Unified Courts Homepage](#)
- [E-Courts](#)
- [E-Track](#)
- [Civil/Supreme Case Search](#)
- [NYS Courts Electronic Filing](#)
- [Appellate Division, First Department](#)
- [Appellate Division, Second Department](#)
- [Appellate Division, Third Department](#)
- [Appellate Division, Fourth Department](#)
- [Court of Appeals](#)
- [Attorney Directory](#)
- [Judicial Directory](#)



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