



Statewide Integrated E-Payment

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Many jurisdictions are accepting payments for various case types online, either through a vendor or through a custom developed website. The Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC) approached the development of a statewide e-payment site with the following unique goals:

- Provide a statewide e-payment system that would be fully integrated with several case management systems and that would display “live” case data to payers via the web;
- Provide a one-stop interface for payers so that they could pay fines and costs from the Magisterial District Judge Courts (MDJ) and the Common Pleas (CP) courts at the same time;
- Remove any risk of capturing credit or debit card information from AOPC and the courts;
- Provide a system whereby the money submitted through ePay is automatically distributed to over 600 different court bank accounts with little interaction from AOPC;
- Provide case management interfaces to the payment data so that end-users can simply accept payments rather than having to work from reports of payments received;
- Create a self-funding system whereby the courts do not incur additional expense for the operation of ePay;
- Provide a mechanism for courts to block an individual or case from being eligible for ePay, to help prevent fraud;
- Provide for future integration of the e-payment solution with an in-house developed e-filing solution to be used for magistrate, common pleas, and the appellate courts.

The AOPC ePay system has been in production since 4/5/2010 and has taken in 68,605 payments for fines and costs for a total of \$11,007,736.99. Pennsylvania’s largest counties, Philadelphia and Allegheny County are using ePay successfully at the common pleas level. There are over 328 MDJ sites and 67 Common Pleas Courts using the system with more MDJ courts added every week as a new case management system rolls out to these courts.

Users can access the ePay Online Case Payments site by navigating to the UJS Portal: <http://ujportal.pacourts.us>. The UJS Portal is the home page for all of the electronic services available from Pennsylvania’s Unified Judicial System. Once the page opens, payers can click on ePay in the Navigation Bar at the top of the page to access the ePay Online Case Payments site (See exhibit 1).

Exhibit 1



The process of making an online payment has the following basic steps:

1. Search for cases or payment plans
2. Add cases or payment plans to a shopping cart
3. Specify the payment amounts and enter the payment information

When the ePay page opens, there are several options available to search for a case. To begin the search, the payer clicks on the link for the type of search they want to perform.

I want to make a payment on my court case and I have the...

[Citation Number for the ticket](#)

[Payment Plan Number for the court case](#)

[Docket Number for the court case](#)

[Name of the person](#)

[Name of the organization/company](#)

The fields available for entering information to search vary depending on the type of search chosen. For most search types, payers need to select the court type where the case was heard (for example, Court of Common Pleas) to view additional fields.

Exhibit 2

Participant Name Search	Docket Number Search
<p>* Court Type: <input type="text" value="Court of Common Pleas"/></p> <p>* Last Name: <input type="text"/> <small>(Exact Last Name)</small></p> <p>* First Name: <input type="text"/> <small>(Example: James or Ja)</small></p> <p>Case Type: <input type="text"/></p> <p>and any combination of</p> <p>Zip Code: <input type="text"/></p> <p>Date of Birth: <input type="text"/></p> <p>Offense Date: <input type="text"/> through <input type="text"/></p> <p>Court County: <input type="text"/></p> <p><input type="button" value="Search"/> <input type="button" value="Clear"/></p>	<p>* Court Type: <input type="text" value="Magisterial District Court"/></p> <p>If you have the whole docket number, please enter it below.</p> <p>* Docket Number: MJ-<input type="text"/>-<input type="text"/>-<input type="text"/>-<input type="text"/> <small>(Example: MJ-51301-TR-1234567-2010)</small></p> <p>Or if you only have part of the docket number, we can help you determine the rest.</p> <p>Court County: <input type="text"/></p> <p>Court Office: <input type="text"/></p> <p>Case Type: <input type="text"/></p> <p>Case Number: <input type="text"/></p> <p>Year Filed: <input type="text"/></p> <p><input type="button" value="Search"/> <input type="button" value="Clear"/></p>

After entering the information for the search, the payer clicks SEARCH. The results of the search are returned in a grid on the screen. The search results are dynamically retrieved from the case management systems in near real time. When cases or payment plans are displayed in the grid, the payer selects the checkbox for each case or payment plan they want to make a payment on and clicks ADD TO CART.

Exhibit 3

Participant Name Search

* Court Type: Court of Common Pleas

* Last Name: Ayers
(Exact Last Name)

* First Name: John
(Example: James or Ja)

Case Type: Criminal
and any combination of

Zip Code:

Date of Birth:

Offense Date: 08/01/2010 through 08/29/2010

Court County: Allegheny

Docket Number	Short Caption	Filing Date	County	Case Status	OTN	Date of Birth	
<input type="checkbox"/>	CP-02-CR-0010921-2010	Comm. v. Ayers, John P.	8/27/2010 10:23:58 AM	Allegheny	Adjudicated	R0167365	8/27/2010
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CP-02-CR-0010923-2010	Comm. v. Ayers, John P.	8/27/2010 10:47:43 AM	Allegheny	Adjudicated	R0167370	8/27/2010

Payment Plan-Number Search

Court Type: Court of Common Pleas

If you have the whole payment plan number, please enter it below.

* Payment Plan Number: 02-2010-P10759
(Example: 25-2010-P123)

Or if you only have part of the payment plan number, we can help you determine the rest.

Court County: Allegheny

Year Created: 2010

Payment Plan Number: 10759

Payment Plan 02-2010-P10759

Docket Number	Short Caption	Filing Date	County	Case Status	OTN	Date of Birth	
<input type="checkbox"/>	CP-02-CR-0010923-2010	Comm. v. Ayers, John P.	8/27/2010 10:47:43 AM	Allegheny	Adjudicated	R0167370	8/27/2010

After the payer clicks ADD TO CART, case information is passed to a third-party shopping cart. The cart displays the cases and payment plans selected in the grid. Payers enter the Amount to Pay for each case or payment plan. For payment plans, the Amount to Pay automatically defaults to the amount due. Payers can click ADD ANOTHER to return to search for more cases and payment plans or click CHECKOUT to proceed to making the payment.

Exhibit 4

Shopping Cart

Docket/Payment Plan Number	Description	Current Balance	Amount to Pay
CP-02-CR-0010921-2010	Comm. v. Ayers, John P.	\$0.00	\$ 0.00 <input type="button" value="Remove"/>
02-2010-P10759	Payment Plan 02-2010-P10759 Next payment amount due: \$75.00 Next payment due date: 09/01/2010 CP-02-CR-0010923-2010 Comm. v. Ayers, John P.	\$300.00	\$ 75.00 <input type="button" value="Remove"/>
Subtotal:			\$75.00

When the payer selects CHECK OUT, a U.S. Bank E-Payment Service site opens and displays a summary of what has been selected for payment. Use of the U.S. Bank E-Payment Service prevents AOPC or the courts from needing to store or have access to credit or debit card information. Payers enter credit card or ATM/debit card information and billing address on the U.S. Bank site. U.S. Bank was selected in order to provide PCI compliance without the court needing to assume that responsibility.

Exhibit 5

Make a Payment - Fines, Costs and Restitution

* Required Field

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Payment Amount: \$150.00

Payment Method: Credit/ATM/Debit

Scheduled Payment Date: Aug-30-2010

PAYMENT DETAILS

Docket No. / Payment Plan No. 1: CP-02-CR-0010921-2010
Payment Amount 1: \$75.00

Docket No. / Payment Plan No. 2: 02-2010-P10759
Payment Amount 2: \$75.00

This payment may be assessed a convenience fee. The fee amount will display on the payment verification screen. You will have the opportunity to cancel this payment before the fee is charged.

Make a Payment - Fines, Costs and Restitution

* Required Field

ACCOUNT INFORMATION

Use ATM Card

ATM Card Number:

Use Credit/Debit Card

Credit/Debit Card Type: Choose one...

Credit/Debit Card Number:

Expiration Date: /

Process this credit card as an ATM debit card if eligible

BILLING ADDRESS

Street Address 1:

Street Address 2:

City/Town:

State/Province/Region:

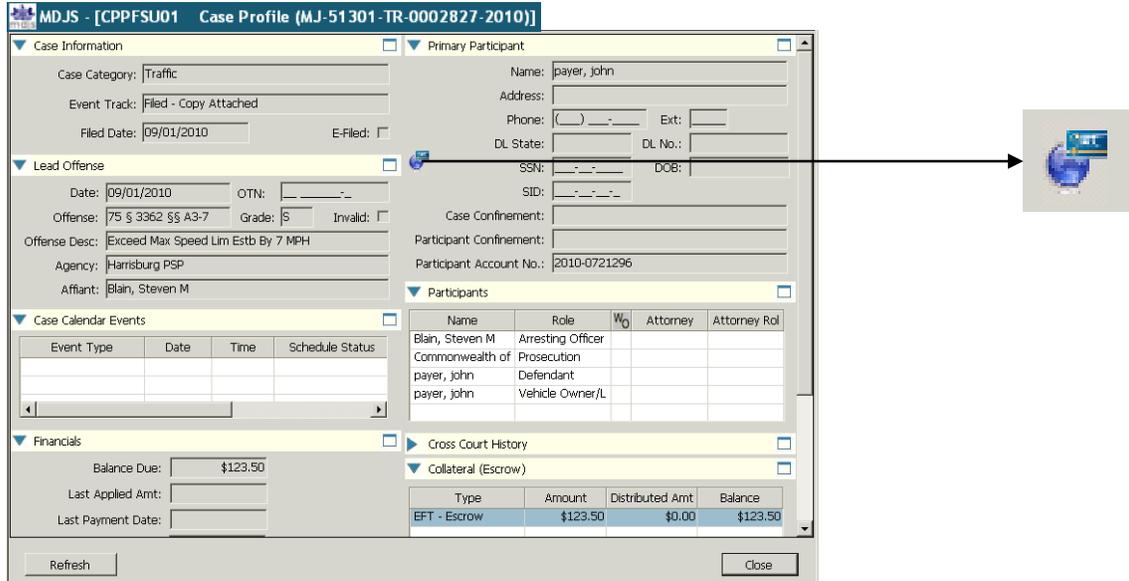
Zip/Postal Code:

Country:

Court Acceptance of Payments

The online system provides real time notification to the court that a payment has been made through messaging. An alert is displayed on the Case Profile and Receipting screens. This alert indicates that an e-Payment is being processed to assist court staff in determining whether further court actions need to be delayed, such as a warrant for non-payment. Payments generally complete the processing cycle within a day.

Exhibit 6



Each of the case management systems includes interfaces for managing and accepting e-Payments. A pending payment screen displays all the pending ePay payments.

MDJS - [ACEPSU01 Pending ePayment - Summary]

4 records returned.

ePay Date	Payment Amount	Docket Number	ePay Confirmation Number	Online Payment Status	Responsible Participant
09/01/2010	\$123.50	MJ-51301-TR-0002828-2010	PENFCR900000001	Received Notification	payer, john
09/01/2010	\$123.50	MJ-51301-TR-0002827-2010	PENFCR900000002	Received Remittance	payer, john
09/01/2010	\$123.50	MJ-51301-TR-0002828-2010	PENFCR900000003	ACH Confirmed	payer, john
09/01/2010	\$123.50	MJ-51301-TR-0002827-2010	PENFCR900000004	ACH Confirmed	payer, john

MDJS - [ACEPSU01 Pending ePayment - Summary]

4 records returned.

Payor	Address	Short Caption	Receipt Number	E-Mail	Phone
		Comm. v. payer, john			
Payer, John	5035 Ritter Rd. Mechanicsburg, PA	Comm. v. payer, john		something@gmail.com	(555) 555-1212
Payer, John	5035 Ritter Rd. Mechanicsburg, PA	Comm. v. payer, john	51301-2010-R0005211	something@gmail.com	(555) 555-1212
Payer, John	5035 Ritter Rd. Mechanicsburg, PA	Comm. v. payer, john	51301-2010-R0005212	something@gmail.com	(555) 555-1212

An ePay Processing Screen allows court staff to review payments and apply them to cases individually and in batch. For traffic citations that have a set fine, the user can also enter a Fast

Track disposition. Payers are reminded repeatedly online that full payment of a fixed fine traffic citation constitutes a guilty plea.

Exhibit 8

MDJS - [ACEDSU01 ePayment Processing - Summary]

Apply Escrow FastTrack Disposition Batch Receipt

2 records returned.

Payment Date	Payment Amount	Deposit Date	Escrow Balance	Processing Status	Docket Number	Receipt Number	Confirmation No.
09/01/2010	\$123.50	09/01/2010	\$123.50	Case Balance Due	MJ-51301-TR-0002828-2010	51301-2010-R0005211	PENFCR900000003
09/01/2010	\$123.50	09/01/2010	\$123.50	Awaiting Plea	MJ-51301-TR-0002827-2010	51301-2010-R0005212	PENFCR900000004

Fast Track Disposition

ACDIAE02 ePayment Processing - Fast Track Disposition - Add

Citation Number: _____ Resp. Participant: payer, john

Docket Number: MJ-51301-TR-0002827-2010 Short Caption: Comm. v. payer, john

Plea: Guilty Plea Defendant Present: No Expected Amt.: \$123.50

Payment Details

Payor: Payer, John Receipt Comments (printed on receipt):

Address: 5035 Ritter Rd. Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

Method: ePay Source: ePay Amount: \$123.50

Overpayment: _____ Adjust Balance To Zero: _____

Cashier Drawer: _____

OK Cancel

Additional Information about ePay

- Each transaction processed is assessed a \$2.75 non-refundable convenience fee. A transaction may include multiple payments for cases in both magisterial district judge and common pleas courts and they may include courts from more than one county.
- Payment can only be accepted online for counties that have chosen to participate. The system can be configured to include/exclude counties.
- Cases where the defendant is a minor, holds another protected status, the case is sealed or pending expungement will not be available for online payment unless they are part of a payment plan that includes other cases that are not restricted. For a list of all restrictions, please visit the website.
- AOPC plans to integrate the ePay system with the collection of filing fees for eFiling.
- The ePay web interface uses ASP.net and a SQL based metadata database. It displays case information from a replicated Sybase ASE 15.0.3.0 case management database.

Court Context

The Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts Judicial Automation department has been responsible for development of case management systems for Magisterial District Judges, the Court of Common Pleas Criminal division, and the Pennsylvania Appellate Courts – Supreme, Superior and Commonwealth courts. This office has also been responsible for development of software for the Pennsylvania Board of Law Examiners (PABLE) and for internal administrative services and human resource tracking. These systems also include web interfaces for District

Attorney production of Informations, on-line bar applications, warrant tracking for arresting agencies and other secure users, on-line secure and public docket sheets for appellate and criminal cases, a scheduling interface for the Court of Common Pleas Criminal Division, among others.

Judicial Automation at the AOPC employs a full development staff. In over 20 years of developing software packages, beginning with the Magisterial District Judge (MDJ) System, AOPC has refined a repeatable process for software development, enhancement, and acquisition that involves an iterative lifecycle, joint application development (JAD) with user groups, screen prototyping, cross-disciplinary software development teams, and structured testing.

Tips for Implementation

Tip 1: Identify legal language to be used on the website. AOPC realized that legal information would need to be included on the ePay website to prevent issues with privacy, warrants, failed payments and other issues. The legal language provided by AOPC legal staff is contained on the Privacy Policy, Terms and Conditions, and ePay Homepage screens for review by other jurisdictions considering such a project.

Tip 2: Provide an on-line user guide and helpdesk access. A user guide is available on every ePay screen through the Help link. The Contact Us link directs users to the CP help desk.

Tip 3: Verify bank routing and account numbers with individual court offices and pre-note office bank accounts as implementation proceeds. Courts will need to verify the proper bank routing number to use. The number on a canceled check is not always the number that is to be used for electronic deposits. Courts also need to insure that their accounts are open for electronic deposits. The merchant bank account should be able to pre-note a specific account to insure that deposits can be made.

Tip 4: Identify and implement in pilot courts first. Creating an e-payment system that allows for implementing courts gradually will assist in fine tuning the electronic messaging and file transfer necessary to implement the solution. Each case management system has a table that stores information about which courts are live on ePay in order to enable or disable the web function. AOPC's rollout schedule has been coordinated with the introduction of a new MDJ case management system.

Tip 5: Be prepared for expansion. Once courts can quickly and easily accept on-line payments, they will not hesitate to ask for more. Current initiatives for AOPC include expanding ePay for Juvenile Delinquency and to take Bail Deposits. The Juvenile Delinquency search will permit only docket number and citation searches and will obscure the names of juveniles.

Tip 6: Assign staff to monitor payments and address charge backs. Staff must reconcile the merchant account and monitor that deposits are being made to the proper court accounts. Charge backs are situations where a payment is disputed by the cardholder. It is important to respond to these according to the rules of the bank.

Summary

AOPC sought to provide a fully integrated ePay solution that provides case and balance information to payers and allows court staff to accept payments through a simple process within

the case management systems. A convenience fee is charged for each transaction, creating a self-funding system. Payments to multiple courts and counties can be made within a single ePay transaction. Individual counties and courts that did not accept credit cards can now use an in court terminal to link credit card users to ePay for payment of fines and costs. Courts experience savings on credit card fees. The ePay infrastructure provides the ability for expansion to the acceptance of bail and for use in eFiling.

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Disclaimer: The advice and opinions represented in this bulletin are based on the experiences of the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC). Such recommendations may not be suitable for other jurisdictions, and are only offered in the spirit of sharing experience as information to others considering the installation of similar technologies and adoption of similar processes.