



E-COURTS PORTAL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

March 6, 2023

1. How do I locate the contact details for a specific county Clerk of Court?

Select by county or search for more information [Locations](#).

2. Where can I get training on eCourts Portal?

Additional information about eCourts Portal can be found on the [eCourts Portal Page](#).

3. What is eCourts Portal?

Portal allows the public and elevated access users to access court information online including:

- Perform searches by party name, record number, citation number, attorney bar number, attorney name, business name, case cross-reference number, or nickname
- Search for court dates and hearings by case number, party name, business name, attorney name, attorney bar number, judicial officer, or courtroom
- View case information, records, and documents
- Make instant online credit card transactions to pay fines and fees for criminal cases and infractions.

4. Why is Portal being implemented?

North Carolina General Statute requires certain court documents to be available for review by the public. To fulfill these requirements, the North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts has chosen Tyler Technologies' Portal solution to provide greater accessibility of court documents. Portal will allow users to view certain court information online and not require a trip to the county Clerk of Courts office.

5. When will eCourts Portal become available for use?

Portal availability will mirror Odyssey ICMS go-live dates. More information regarding the Odyssey ICMS statewide roll-out schedule can be found at [Timeline](#).





6. Who can use eCourts Portal?

Anyone wishing to access court information online can use Portal, including the public and elevated access users. Certain information is restricted per North Carolina general statutes.

7. Is there a fee for using eCourts Portal?

Portal is a service provided by the North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts to enhance public access to court information.

8. Will eCourts Portal work with my internet browser?

Portal will work with many common internet browsers, including mobile device browsers. If you are experiencing problems with eCourts Portal, try a different browser or clear the cache on the browser you are using. Portal functions best with Microsoft Edge and Google Chrome internet browsers. If you are not using Edge or Chrome, you may experience issues with search functionalities and displaying documents.

9. What is the difference between eCourts Portal and Courthouse KIOSK?

The majority of functionality and information available through Portal is also available through a Courthouse KIOSK. There are a few exceptions. **MAKE PAYMENTS** is only available on Portal. Downloading is only permissible through Portal. And Certain Case Types are only available to Anonymous Users through the KIOSK (e.g., Protective Order Cases).

10. Can I file a document with the court through eCourts Portal?

No. Portal is only for the viewing of case information and documents. Filing of court documents online can be accomplished through eCourts File & Serve and Guide & File applications. For more information regarding eCourts File & Serve and Guide & File applications please click [eCourts File & Serve](#) or [eCourts Guide & File](#).





11. Do I need to register for eCourts Portal?

Please view the [Portal Introduction and Overview Video](#) for more information about Portal and how to register. Registration for Portal is not required for Public users to search and view publicly available court information. Registration is recommended if the user plans to visit Portal often and would like the ability to save cases to the ‘My Cases’ folder. Registration is required for elevated access users. Only those users who have a verified business need and authority granted by statute will be approved for elevated access to view restricted case types or non-public information. Please reference [Portal Government Agency Elevated Access FAQs](#) and [Portal Elevated Access One-Pager](#).

12. Are all case documents available on eCourts Portal?

All Public users will have access to records which are considered public record and are not confidential, sealed, or otherwise restricted. Some restricted, non-public records require elevated access to view in Portal e.g. Criminal Warrants Unreturned, Juvenile Case Records, and Protective Orders. Please reference [Portal Government Agency Elevated Access FAQs](#) and [Portal Elevated Access One-Pager](#).

13. Can I use eCourts Portal to conduct a criminal background check?

No. eCourts Portal is NOT the official court record. PUBLIC Portal simply provides Internet access to public docket entries for public case types only. Contact the appropriate county Clerk of Court to request official copies of court records.

14. Can I get a case removed from eCourts Portal?

The Superior Court routinely considers motions to seal or expunge court records. If a court record is ordered sealed or expunged, it will no longer be available for viewing online. Please contact an attorney to determine if your case is eligible to be sealed or expunged.

15. How current are eCourts Portal records?

Case summaries and document images are available for viewing in Portal within minutes of being uploaded to Odyssey ICMS. Availability of specific case information or documents may be affected by daily case volume and processing times.





16. Does eCourts Portal provide an official court record?

No. eCourts Portal is NOT the official court record. PUBLIC Portal simply provides Internet access to public docket entries for public case types only. Contact the appropriate county Clerk of Court to request official copies of court records.

17. How can I locate Social Security numbers in eCourts Portal?

Social Security Number validation is NOT available through Portal for the PUBLIC or any Elevated Access Role.

18. How do I search for a hearing in eCourts Portal?

Using Portal's **SEARCH HEARINGS** portlet, you can search current court calendars for hearing locations and times. **SEARCH HEARINGS** allows users to search by case number, party name, business name, attorney name, attorney bar number, judicial officer, or courtroom. Additional information regarding Portal's **SEARCH HEARINGS** portlet can be found on the [eCourts Portal Page](#).

Note: Bondsman are recorded in Odyssey as a Business. Smart Search Criteria must be changed to search. Refer to [Portal Overview Guide](#) for additional information.

19. How do I search for a case in eCourts Portal?

SMART SEARCH provides users with a detailed and near to "real-time" Case Summary, also known as the Register of Actions, listing of their case information. In **SMART SEARCH**, members of the public can find a detailed listing of a court file's timeline that would include the Case Summary, Case Information, Assignment Information, Party Information, Causes of Action (Civil, Family, Probate, and Mental Health cases), Case Events, Dispositions, Hearings, and Financial Information (when applicable). **SMART SEARCH** has Advanced Filtering Options (Civil Actions, Special Proceedings (non-confidential), Estates, and Criminal Actions), in accordance with NCGS 7A-109(b)(1-4). **SMART SEARCH** houses crucial information and should be used in conjunction with **NC JUDGMENT SEARCH** to provide the most detailed listing of information.





Additional information regarding Portal **SMART SEARCH** functionality can be found on the [eCourts Portal Page](#).

20. How do I resolve being unable to locate a case or defendant through Smart Search?

Reference the [Portal Overview Guide](#) and [Portal Advanced User Guide](#) for specific details on searching by name and required file number format.

Helpful Hint: Clear cache, use another browser, or a browser incognito window.

21. What if I have a question about the documents or specifics of my case?

For answers to specific questions about a case or case documents, please contact the appropriate county Clerk of Court.

22. Will case events prior to the Odyssey Go-Live be viewable on eCourts Portal?

Yes, all case events occurring prior to Odyssey Go-Live will be converted, however the time stamp will be 12:00 AM.

23. How do I search for a judgment in eCourts Portal?

The **NC JUDGMENT SEARCH** in Portal functions as an external tool to allow members of the public to search for N.C. Judgment Indexes entered in the N.C. Judicial System's database in accordance with NCGS 7A-109(b)(6). This search can be performed utilizing a party's name or case number. Results include judgments related to Civil, Family, Small Claims, Special Proceedings, Criminal, and Miscellaneous court items. The **NC JUDGMENT SEARCH** can be filtered to help users narrow results based on the case type, status, location, and date of the judgment. Results provided will feature case number, disposition status, index date and time, parties to the action, and judgment comments that are relevant to the disposition. However, to view the complete case summary, a searcher must navigate to the **SMART SEARCH** portlet.

Additional information regarding Portal's **NC JUDGMENT SEARCH** can be found on the [eCourts Portal Page](#).





Portal NC JUDGMENT SEARCH references the amounts and totals owed based on the original Judgment date. Please contact your county Clerk of Court for the current amounts and totals owed.

The Payoff Date and Current Payoff Amount updates in SMART SEARCH once the county Clerk of Court updates to the current date in Odyssey.

Helpful Hints for JUDGMENT SEARCH:

- check the “Include Inactive and Satisfied Judgments” box
- enter AT LEAST the full last name
- currently there is no wild card functionality i.e. “smith” returns all results with name smith. Enter “smith, jo”, only Jo Smith returns. Enter “smith, john”, only John Smith returns

24. Can the Judgment Index Date and Time be changed?

No, the Index Date and Time are system generated and cannot be backdated or modified by any county Clerk of Court.

25. What payments can be made in eCourts Portal?

Criminal court fees and fines can be paid online without visiting the courthouse by using Portal’s **MAKE PAYMENTS** portlet.

The following payment types are accepted online:

- Cost and Fees
- Restitution
- Criminal Attorney Fees
- Probation and Parole Fees

The following **CANNOT** be paid online:

- Alimony
- Bond Forfeitures
- Cash Bonds
- Child Support Payments





- Civil Judgments
- Condemnations
- Rent Bonds
- Trust Funds
- Upset Bids

26. Are there payments I cannot make on Portal?

You are only allowed to make payments online for Criminal cases. Statutes do not allow credit card payments for civil judgments, alimony, trust accounts, etc. These payments must be made in person or by mail, via cash or money order, to the applicable county Clerk of Court.

Portal NC JUDGMENT SEARCH references the amounts and totals owed based on the original Judgment date. Please contact your county Clerk of Court for the current amounts and totals owed.

The Payoff Date and Current Payoff Amount updates in **SMART SEARCH** once the county Clerk of Court updates to the current date in Odyssey.

27. What if I need to make a payment but can't find my criminal case or infraction?

Contact the appropriate county Clerk of Court if you are unable to find your case and the officer or judge indicated you could pay this online.

28. What methods of payment are accepted in eCourts Portal?

Acceptable methods of payment include Visa, Mastercard, and Discover. A 2.39% transaction fee will be assessed, with a \$1.00 minimum charge per transaction. eChecks are NOT accepted through Portal **MAKE PAYMENTS**.

