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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Justice

### **E-filing improves access to B.C.'s highest court**

VANCOUVER – The B.C. Court of Appeal is making it easier for users to file court documents.

E-filing was piloted over the past year by a number of B.C. law firms, and now the Court of Appeal would like to invite other users to file their court documents online. Electronic filing or e-filing of civil documents can be processed through Court Services Online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Examples of documents that can be filed in a civil appeal include: notice of appeal, leave to appeal, notice of cross appeal, appearance, notice of motion, affidavit, certificate of readiness, application to vary, leave to intervene, indigent application, notice of settlement or abandonment, letters, requisition, registrar's appointment, bill of costs, and certificate of costs.

In addition to the convenience, the expansion of this online service will also help reduce paper consumption, travel and delivery costs.

British Columbia now has all three levels of court participating in the e-filing system. The Supreme Court of British Columbia and the Provincial Court of British Columbia have offered e-filing since June 2007.

Court Services Online was introduced in 2005 as part of a series of projects focused on the environment and forms part of the overall government strategy to provide alternative options and access to government services.

#### **Quotes:**

#### **Minister of Justice and Attorney General Shirley Bond –**

“It is imperative that we continually look for ways to streamline the justice system and make it easier for the users of our court system. In addition to being green, this project is just one of the steps we are taking to enhance access to the courts and reform the justice system.”

## **Chief Justice Lance Finch –**

“Court of Appeal e-filing expands access to the court for litigants outside B.C.’s major urban centres by allowing parties to file documents without attending at the court. When a document is e-filed, it also becomes instantaneously available to litigants and the public through the electronic registry, Court Services Online.”

“As more court documents come online, court information can be distributed and searched from law offices, home computers or public access terminals. Litigants, judges as well as the public can only benefit from this improved level of accessibility and court openness.”

## **Lawyers from law firm of Lawson Lundell –**

“We find e-filing with the Court of Appeal to be fast and efficient and look forward to its broader application in appellate matters.”

## **Quick Facts:**

- The B.C. Court of Appeal e-filing pilot project began in June 2011 with a partnership between the court, the Ministry of Justice Court Services Branch and a number of law firms.
- 547 Court of Appeal documents have been e-filed since the pilot began.

## **Learn More:**

B.C. Court of Appeal: [www.courts.gov.bc.ca/Court\\_of\\_Appeal](http://www.courts.gov.bc.ca/Court_of_Appeal)

Court Services Online: <https://eservice.ag.gov.bc.ca/cso/index.do>

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