



EMPLOYEE SELF-SERVICE (ESS): Everything You Need on One Page

CONNECT will change many of the Judiciary's human resources processes from paper-based to a modern, online approach. One of the most exciting features is Employee Self-Service (ESS), an easy way to use CONNECT online. ESS is the one-stop home page that puts everything you need to do in CONNECT all on one page. Through ESS, you will perform various day-to-day human resources transactions that today are usually completed by paper forms, from viewing and updating your personal information to enrolling in training.

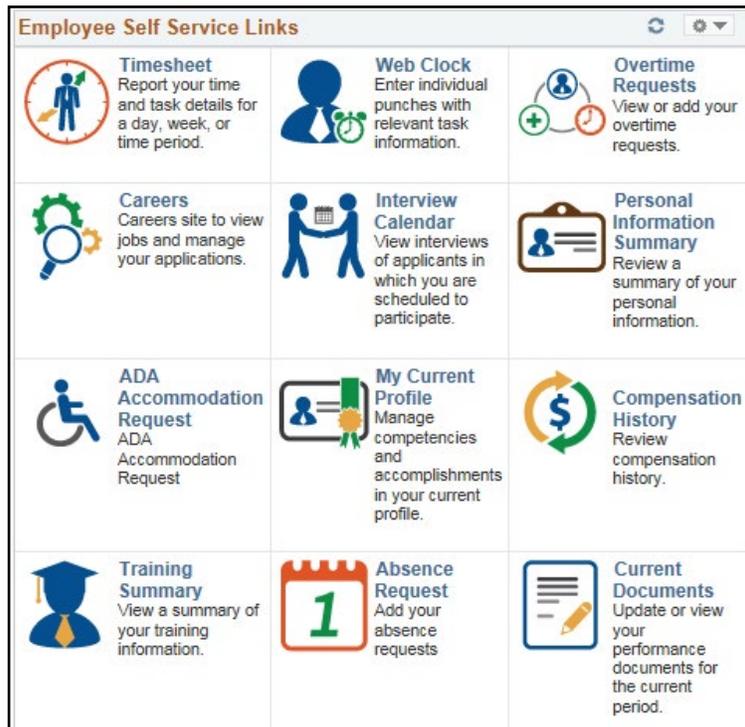
A key feature that employees of the Judiciary are eagerly awaiting is the ability to complete and submit time sheets online. With CONNECT, you will enter your time online and submit your time sheet to your approving supervisor with the click of a button. Another exciting innovation is the online leave request process. All employees will submit leave requests to supervisors through the ESS portal, and, once approved, they will be able to see the amount of leave requested and current available leave balance. You will also be able to adjust a prior time sheet online simply by going to that pay period, making the change to the specific date, and resubmitting for approval. You will also be able to submit requests for overtime and ADA accommodations entirely online.

What Is CONNECT?

The **CONNECT** project will bring many Judiciary HR functions into one software package to make processes more efficient and user-friendly.

Using ESS, Judiciary employees can log into CONNECT to view their current profile information, such as their address, phone number, email address, emergency contact, etc., and submit changes right online. Other helpful ESS features include having online access to the performance appraisal processes as well as the

ability to create an entire learning plan that relates to an employee's performance goals and career path.



By reducing the amount of paperwork necessary to handle HR processes, CONNECT will let you access your information on a nearly real-time basis. Everything will be processed quickly, efficiently and electronically. Paper forms, actual signatures, and manual approvals will no longer be needed. The accuracy and quality of information will improve because employees will be able to update their information themselves online.

CONNECT's Employee Self-Service will improve and streamline many of the current Judiciary human resources processes and will empower employees to manage their own personal information. In addition, ESS

operations will reduce the administrative and transactional tasks performed by the Human Resources Department, allowing it to be more connected to employees and more strategic for Judiciary operations.

HR CONNECTION, a monthly communication from the Judiciary's Department of Human Resources (HR), provides you with key HR information and the latest happenings in the department. While stories may include broad HR news and updates, most stories will focus on CONNECT as we lead up to the January 2016 launch.

Email: connect@mdcourts.gov

Web: <http://cournet.courts.state.md.us/connect/index.html>

In the Spotlight

Meet Lee Robinson, Deputy Director of Human Resources

Lee Robinson is the Deputy Director of Human Resources for the Judiciary. He has worked in Human Resources at the Judiciary for 20 years, first with the District Court and then with the AOC. He lives on the Eastern Shore and, when he's not working, he enjoys hunting and playing golf.



Q: When CONNECT launches, what changes do you think the Judiciary employees will find most beneficial?

A: I think they will see that their current work roles will be easier to navigate because of the improvements to current Judiciary business processes. Furthermore, the improvements to leave accounting and timekeeping with CONNECT will make it easier for employees to record time worked and to manage their leave.

Q: What changes are you most excited about?

A: Like most folks, I am most excited about the timekeeping and leave accounting functions with CONNECT. These areas are currently the biggest headaches for our employees and managers, and CONNECT will make things much easier for them.

Q: What current process do you think will be most improved with CONNECT?

A: The new business model for the HR profession is to be more of a consultant to its customers rather than merely a processing entity. Dennis Scott, the Director of the Judiciary HR Department, and I are committed to moving the department in that direction. CONNECT will help us achieve that goal by simplifying our processes and procedures and by helping us be more responsive to our customers. I'm sure, however, there will be many challenges along the way, and we will do our best to overcome them.



CONNECT Is Being Tested . . . and Retested

CONNECT is a major initiative at the Judiciary that will affect every employee. From time sheets and leave requests to developing detailed training plans, CONNECT will revolutionize every HR process. For this reason, the CONNECT implementation plan calls for several rounds of comprehensive testing.

The first testing approach is called "integration testing." This is the initial effort to make sure that the new system is set up based on the Judiciary's defined requirements. This testing took place throughout May and June. Subject matter experts from the Human Resources Department followed test scripts of specific HR processes for each of their areas.

The next phase of testing is called "user acceptance testing" (UAT). This is our most comprehensive testing period. UAT will include a much broader audience of Judiciary employees, involving almost all of the 160 members of the CONNECTors network. They will each participate in one of the six different two-day sessions taking place throughout the end of August and beginning of September. During these testing events, the CONNECTors will perform all the HR processes end-to-end for employees as well as managers.

As the CONNECT efforts reach the home stretch, the remaining testing cycles focus on performance aspects. Separate tests are conducted to ensure that any information that is moving into CONNECT will happen properly and that server and network speeds will be efficient, as well as checking that the end results are the same when running current HR processes alongside of CONNECT processes.

CONNECT Fairs Provide First-Hand Look at New Key Features (8/3 - 8/25)

During August, CONNECT Fairs will take place at several Judiciary locations throughout the state. These fairs will give every Judiciary employee an opportunity to have a first-hand look at some of the key features that will be available in CONNECT. Each CONNECT Fair will be open 10 a.m.- 4 p.m. See the list below for dates and locations. At each fair, there will be four different stations that include a moderated, pre-recorded demonstration of these HR processes in CONNECT:

- basic time entry (time sheets)
- employee profile management
- performance appraisals
- education and training management

Subject matter experts will be present to review the process as the demonstrations run and answer questions about CONNECT.

The CONNECT Fairs are an important part of the comprehensive efforts to inform and prepare all Judiciary employees for the transition. These interactive sessions are intended for Judiciary employees at all levels to experience and become familiar with CONNECT.

The CONNECT Fairs will operate as open forums from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. for Judiciary employees to come by as their schedules allow. There are no set start-times for demonstrations or appointments needed. We strongly encourage people to review the information on the CONNECT website to gain a basic understanding about CONNECT prior to attending.

CONNECT Fair dates and county locations:

- Monday, Aug. 3: Kent County (Circuit Court Equity Courtroom, 103 N. Cross St., Chestertown)
- Tuesday, Aug. 4: Washington County (County Administration Building, Room 255, 100 W. Washington St., Hagerstown)
- Wednesday, Aug. 5: Wicomico County (District Court 1st Floor Conf. Rm., 201 Baptist St., Salisbury)
- Thursday, Aug. 6: Prince George's County (District Court Bourne Wing, 14735 Main St., Upper Marlboro)
- Monday, Aug. 10: Baltimore County (Circuit Court Land Records Office, 401 Bosley Ave, Towson)
- Tuesday, Aug. 11: Montgomery County (Circuit Court South Tower, 2nd Floor, 50 Maryland Ave., Rockville)
- Wednesday, Aug. 12: Cecil County (Circuit Court, 129 East Main St., Elkton)
- Thursday, Aug. 13: Charles County (Circuit Court Rm 115, 200 Charles St., La Plata)
- Monday, Aug. 17: Baltimore City, Wabash (Judges' Library, 5800 Wabash Ave., Baltimore)
- Tuesday, Aug. 18: Baltimore City, Eastside (1400 East North Ave., Baltimore)
- Wednesday, Aug. 19: Baltimore City, Mitchell Building (Rm. 610, 100 Calvert St., Baltimore)
- Thursday, Aug. 20: Baltimore City, Hargrove (700 E. Patapsco Ave., Baltimore)
- Tuesday, Aug. 25: Anne Arundel/Annapolis, JECC (Rm. 5-6, 2100 Commerce Park Dr., Annapolis)

For updates on locations or other questions about the CONNECT fairs, visit <http://courtnet.courts.state.md.us/connect/index.html> or email the CONNECT team at connect@mdcourts.gov.