

## **SHAKER HEIGHTS' TECHNOLOGY PLAN**

The Technology Plan of the Shaker Heights Municipal Court (SHMC), as required by Supt. Rule 5(E) and referenced in Local Rule 32, shall be built upon the following aspirational principles:

(1) "Court" should be considered a process of judicial activities and events; "Court" should not be viewed as a location, such as a courthouse; "Court" events should be capable of being experienced and performed both at the courthouse as well as the location of any court participant, including attorneys, parties, witnesses, victims, and the general public.

(2) Technology applications used by the judiciary shall be adapted and regularly updated to facilitate the process of judicial activities and events.

(3) Technology applied in the judicial process must be done so in from the perspective that both the experienced, legally-trained individual, as well as the inexperienced, layperson unfamiliar with judicial activities and events, will be engaging in the judicial process.

(4) To facilitate access to judicial events, the mission of the Court and Clerk staff should include educating and facilitating participants who are unfamiliar with technology access; such unfamiliar persons may include persons educated in the judicial process (attorneys, probation officers, etc.) as well as persons not educated in technology; Court and Clerk staff must understand the importance of working with persons in need of technology assistance.

### **I. Additional Expenses or Costs in Implementing Technology Plan**

The SHMC strives to meet all requirements and obligations imposed by law in a cost effective and financially responsible manner. Accordingly, nothing in this Technology Plan shall be construed as imposing an obligation on the SHMC, or its staff, to incur expenses or costs to implement said Plan. Rather, the SHMC and its staff shall strive to use those available financial resources to do the same.

### **II. Plan for Electronic Delivery of Documents**

- A. E-filing is a near-term goal of the SHMC.
- B. Regardless of e-filing, the SHMC should provide for electronic delivery of pleadings (email address and fax number at Clerk's Office) to assist pro se and others not familiar with e-filing.
- C. Email documents to SHMC through Court maintained email accounts for non-pleadings and as emergency back-up plan since documents can be filed with the Court.

### **III. Plan for Electronic Communications from and to SHMC**

- A. Notifications and reminders by text currently implemented and encouraged; working on email functionality.
- B. Email and text\* communications to SHMC through business emails and court-provided phones (\*texting for probation officers and their clients).
- C. Duty to archive communications the same as written documents as a record in compliance with the current retention schedule.

### **IV. Plan for Video-Conference Attendance**

- A. Use of Zoom platform for virtual hearings.
- B. Posting "how to connect" instructions on SHMC's website in addition to sending along with court notifications of hearings.
- C. Posting/sending instructions to witnesses and counsel regarding testimony requirements.
- D. Encourage counsel and litigants to notify SHMC officials when they believe remote appearance is necessary and/or appropriate; economic and efficiencies should be considered and fostered when considering requests to appear remotely.
- E. Limitations on copying and re-broadcasting of Court proceedings.

### **V. Plan/Purpose of SHMC's Website**

- A. The purpose of the SHMC's website is to disseminate information to the public, including rules, schedules, links to useful sites.
- B. Provide avenue for parties who wish to conduct online business with the court (i.e make payments on waivable offenses, payment plans, warrant payoffs, etc.).
- C. Provide access to case documents.

### **VI. Plan for Remote Work Capabilities and Policies for SHMC Employees and Staff**

- A. Virtual private network access for appropriate positions when necessary (Judge's approval required) along with SHMC-provided hardware, such as laptops.

### **VII. Confidentiality, A.D.A. Accommodations, Persons with Technology Impediments**

- A. Compliance by SHMC with Supt. Rules 44 and 45 in pleadings.

- B. Use of technology in administration of Court business and judicial proceedings to accommodate various disabilities.
- C. Public health considerations when providing technology devices and services.