

MiFILE State Bar of Michigan Product Survey 2021

MiFILE is Michigan's standardized electronic filing system for trial courts. As this statewide initiative is deployed in more courts across the state, and as the system itself is enhanced along the way, stakeholder feedback is critical in making sure the MiFILE product is delivering *value* to its users. In December of 2020, the MiFILE team, in collaboration with the State Bar of Michigan, sent out an attorney stakeholder survey to gather feedback on system performance and attorney e-mail practices. The information below highlights many of the takeaways from that survey.

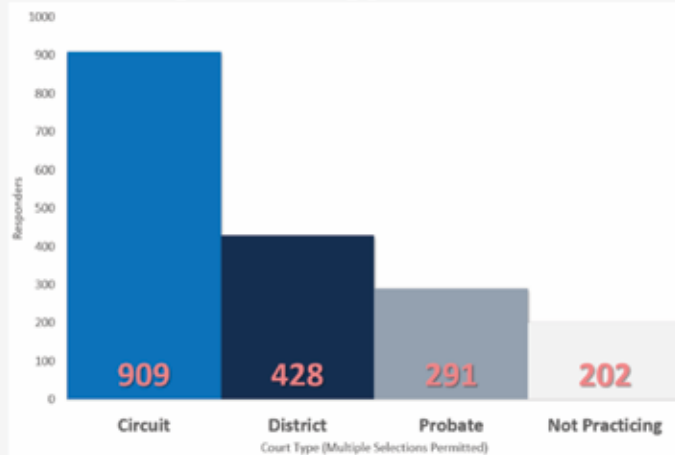
Responses

1318

Top Responder Practice Areas

- Civil Damages
- Criminal
- Housing & Real Estate
- Estates & Trusts

Primary Court Types for Practice



Pilot Court E-filers

54%

Model Court E-filers

21%

Did you know... while it may look like all e-filing courts are using MiFILE, there are really only three *model courts* that are actually using MiFILE today (Washtenaw Circuit Court, Ottawa Probate Court, and 37th District Court). There are also *pilot courts* with similar—but distinct—e-filing systems. Eventually all courts, including the pilot courts, will join MiFILE; providing a uniform filing experience across Michigan. Until the e-filing pilot courts join MiFILE, there will continue to be slight differences in the filing experience in these courts.

Do you support requiring your MiFILE-registered e-mail address to match the e-mail address provided to the State Bar of Michigan?



70% Support



20% No Opinion, Blank, Unsure



10% Not in Favor

We are working with the State Bar to potentially add an additional e-mail address field specifically for MiFILE. Many courts use State Bar data, so using this same data will provide consistency and accuracy.

Important Update

An upcoming MiFILE release will change how parties and e-service are managed. MiFILE will only permit parties and persons with a legal interest in a case to be service recipients. Users can no longer “pick and choose” which parties are e-served—either all eligible e-service recipients are e-served, or none are.

Who submits your filings?

I submit all or most things
(52%)

My staff submits all or most things
(44%)

Both (4%)

MiFILE allows attorneys to “connect” with support staff who can file on their behalf (and disconnect if needed). This feedback lets us know that this feature should continue to be supported.

In courts without e-filing, do you personally receive all served documents and court notices/orders, or are these items filtered first through support staff?

I receive all or most things
(55%)

My staff receives all or most things first
(45%)

We are currently developing an e-service enhancement to allow support staff to receive e-served documents (not just personally filed documents).

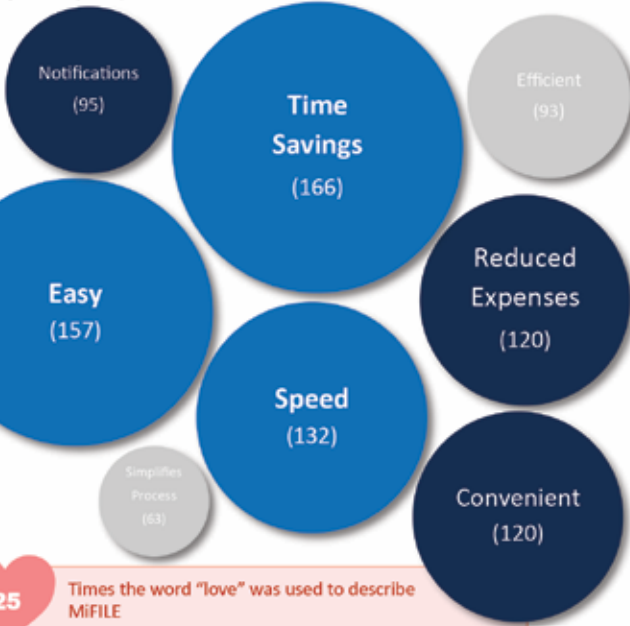
What's Next?

The MiFILE team is in the process of onboarding the next round of MiFILE courts; while also developing several key features, such as the MiFILE Document Management System (MiFILE DMS) and adding new case types for e-filing. Be sure to check the [MiFILE website](#) for the latest details and updates on everything MiFILE.



What Do You Like about E-filing?

We asked all attorneys that have e-filed in a model or pilot court what they liked about the e-filing systems. The bubble chart below shows the top eight responses based on the frequency of keywords, phrases, and/or sentiments used.



25 Times the word "love" was used to describe MiFILE

In Your Own Words...

- I love it. I want you to create a state wide system for EVERY court in the State.
- I love [the] e-Filing process because it is efficient. It is helping with my business because my clients are very satisfied with the e-filing system.
- It saves time and saves the clients on litigation expenses.
- The e-file system is generally fantastic. It is great that just typing in a case number pulls up the case to immediately work.
- It's fast, efficient, and service notifications are immediate.
- E-filing takes the guesswork out of when the pleadings will be delivered to opposing counsel.
- E-filing has saved us [a] considerable amount of time and money. [I]t has permitted our practice to maintain a higher volume of cases.
- It is efficient, convenient, and extremely easy to use. It requires that all courts use one method for filing, which allows our practice to extend to more counties than those in close proximity to our office. It also helps us keep track of our filed documents and ensure that they are filed timely and correctly.
- It is just so easy. It is easy to use. It is easy to file and receive filings. It saves me time and money on printing and mailing. It makes serving parties very easy. I also love how it immediately emails me if I have been served with any document in a case.

What Do You Want Improved?

We also asked e-filing attorneys what they *didn't* like about e-filing, or how the system can be improved. The bubble chart shows the top six responses, and each is described in more detail below.

- 1) **Expand MiFILE:** More than anything else, attorneys want MiFILE to be available in more courts. *Good news—the onboarding process for the next group of MiFILE courts has already begun!*
- 2) **Standardize:** A common concern was that the e-filing experience is different in each court; filing types, submission rules, and acceptance criteria should all be standardized. *Much of this will be achieved when the pilot courts join MiFILE and certain features are enhanced.*
- 3) **Improve Notifications:** Several responders commented on the volume of e-mails received from MiFILE. Others want to see content changes for greater clarity and convenience, such as including the case title and/or filing party instead of just case number. *Did you know you can turn off certain notifications in your user settings to cut down on the volume of e-mails received? We are also looking at refining our e-mail content and design, and your feedback will help inform those enhancements.*
- 4) **Improve User Interface:** Some users expressed concerns that the system is overly complicated or not as intuitive as it could be. *While more responders indicated that the MiFILE system is easy, intuitive, and user-friendly, there is certainly room for improvement. Attorneys who expressed an interest in participating in our MiFILE feedback forums will be able to provide input on user interface improvements.*
- 5) **Online Case File:** Users want to be able to access all records from a case online—not just their own filings. *Online access to case records is a component of the MiFILE Document Management System (MiFILE DMS) currently in development. For courts that choose to implement the MiFILE DMS, users will be able to retrieve all court documents that they are permitted to access online. Initially, electronic access may be limited to secured workstations at the courthouse. Eventually, the goal is to provide secure access from any location.*
- 6) **Rejection Process:** Users expressed frustration that documents get rejected by the court. Sometimes it is not clear what the reason for rejection is; other times, there are concerns about improper rejections. *Two enhancements are being developed now to help with this. For clarity, courts will be able to communicate multiple rejection reasons more easily to filers. Courts will also be able to return certain deficient filings for correction—without rejecting them.*

