



# OFFICE OF COURT ADMINISTRATION

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## Updated Statement on IT Security Breach Affecting Judiciary

On Friday, May 8th, the Office of Court Administration (OCA), the information technology (IT) provider for the appellate courts and state judicial agencies within the Texas Judicial Branch, identified a serious security event in the branch network, which was later determined to be a ransomware attack.

As the investigation and identification of the breach draws to a close, OCA has shifted fully to repair and recovery of the network. The attack has been disruptive for all of our users, and many have had to put into place temporary processes to continue limited operations. The attack has been especially disruptive for the appellate courts. The Texas Appellate Management and eFiling System (TAMES), a case management system that contains the information and documents for the appellate courts, has been unavailable to the courts. With TAMES temporarily unavailable and servers and websites disabled, most courts of appeals cannot access records and electronic files, including most of the documents attached to TAMES and most information pertaining to pending cases. In the short term, some, but not all of the courts of appeals, may be relying on trial court clerks, attorneys and litigants to provide needed documents.

“For the past two months, Texas courts have stood up to the enormous challenges of the pandemic,” said Texas Supreme Court Chief Justice Nathan L. Hecht. “Judges and court staffs throughout the state have remained available, often at considerable personal sacrifice, to serve the people. The ransomware cyberattack presents additional challenges to appellate justices and their staffs. While these impediments may slow our work for a short while, they will not affect the careful consideration given every case. All Texans should be proud of all the many, innovative ways in which Texas judges and lawyers have proven their determination. The men and women of the Office of Court Administration have worked tirelessly to get us back on our feet. We appreciate the patience of parties and the public as we work through these situations. We will emerge stronger and ever dedicated to providing justice for all.”

The Texas Judicial Branch has regularly-performed backup data and several backup restoration projects are underway. Several judicial branch entities’ systems and files were not impacted by the attack; however, the lack of network connectivity while OCA has the network disconnected has inhibited the systems and files from being accessed. OCA anticipates recovery to continue for several weeks, and systems will become available at various times over the next several days and weeks.

As previously discussed, the electronic filing portal (eFileTexas) and statewide document retrieval portal (re:SearchTX) were not impacted. Therefore, filers have been able to continue submitting documents for review by courts and to review accepted documents.

OCA is working with state and federal law enforcement, the Texas Department of Information Resources (DIR), the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) cybersecurity team, and other cyber security

professionals. There is no indication that any sensitive information, including personal information, was compromised. Additionally, due to the structure of the IT function within the state judiciary, individual trial court networks throughout the state were unaffected by the cyberattack.

In addition, OCA is working to harden and enhance network security in response to the attack. State judicial branch employees have also received training in cybersecurity in recent weeks and will continue to receive updated training.

OCA appreciates your patience as we work to restore full operations for the Judicial Branch.

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