

Florida Courts



E-Filing Authority

Florida Courts eFiling Authority

User Forum Policy

Introduction

In conjunction with the Chief Justice and the Supreme Court, the Florida Courts E-Filing Authority was established in June 2010 by an Interlocal Agreement creating a public agency pursuant to chapter 163, Florida Statutes, comprised of the Clerks of the Circuit Court who join the Authority and the Clerk of the Supreme Court, as designee of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court on behalf of all the state courts. It is recognized by the agreement that the Clerks of the Circuit Court are the official custodians of the records of the Circuit and County Courts in each Clerk's respective county and, likewise, the Clerk of the Supreme Court is the official custodian of the records of the Florida Supreme Court.

The Florida Courts E-Filing Authority has contracted with the Florida Association of Court Clerks and Comptrollers to design, develop, implement, operate, upgrade, support and maintain an electronic portal for the filing of court records. The portal is to serve as a statewide access point for the electronic access and transmission of court records to and from the courts.

The User Forum Policy will cover the workflow and policies on how incidents, problems, inquiries, release/deployment and configuration are handled as it relates to the eportal.

Purpose

The primary purpose of the User Forum Policy is to ensure that requests for eportal software changes (RFC's) are prioritized and handled in a consistent manner.

To meet the requirements of both the customers and business objectives, The Authority has implemented the FACC Service Center as a central point of contact for handling all customer and user support. The Service Center is the key function that is responsible for managing, coordinating, resolving, and maintaining customer and user requests.

This policy identifies the process flow utilized by the Service Center to ensure that no request is lost, forgotten, or ignored and is handled as quickly as possible. The Service Center is committed to out-of-the-box thinking, creative problem solving and a can-do attitude while adhering to the User Forum policy.

The User Forum Policy applies to all individuals who provide services on behalf of Authority to both internal and external customers and users.

Definitions

Acceptance: Formal agreement that an IT service, process, plan or other deliverable is complete, accurate, reliable and meets its specified requirements.

Application: Software that provides functions that are required by an IT service. Each application may be part of more than one IT service. An application may run on one or more servers or clients.

Auto Ticket Generator (ATG): A module of HEAT that creates and modifies call records directly from email system and ASCII text files.

Beta: A limited release to selected customers for user acceptance testing. The beta testing time varies depending on the complexity of the release.

Business Process Automation Module (BPAM): A HEAT module created to monitor call record business rules and perform related actions.

Call Type: A Category that is used to distinguish incoming requests to a Service Desk. Common call types are incidents and service request.

Category: A named group of things that have something in common. Categories are used to group similar things together.

Change: The addition, modification or removal of anything that could have an effect on IT Services.

Change Advisory Board (CAB): The board appointed by the IT services management. Meets regularly to review Requests for Change (RFC), to monitor the effectiveness of the Change Management Policy (CMP) and consists of two representatives (i.e. primary and secondary) from each of the departments. Additionally a CAB librarian is appointed to maintain a record of the CAB's activities, document meeting minutes, generate reports from HEAT of the submitted RFCs, and manage a calendar of scheduled changes.

Change Management: The process responsible for controlling the lifecycle of all changes. The primary objective of change management is to enable beneficial changes to be made with minimum disruption to IT services.

Configuration: A generic term used to describe a group of configuration items that work together to deliver an IT service or a recognizable part of IT service.

Configuration Item (CI): Any component that needs to be managed in order to deliver an IT service. Information about each CI is recorded in a Configuration Record within a Configuration Management System and is maintained throughout its lifecycle by Configuration Management.

Configuration Management: The process responsible for maintaining information about configuration items required to deliver an IT service, including their relationships.

Configuration Management Database (CMDB): A database used to store configuration records throughout their lifecycle.

Configuration Record: A record containing the details of a configuration item.

Critical Incident: The highest level of impact. A critical incident results in significant disruption to the customer.

Customer: Someone who buys goods or services. The term customers is also sometimes informally used to mean users e.g. "This is a customer focused organization."

Deployment: The activity responsible for movement of new or changed hardware, software, documentation, process, etc. to the live environment. Deployment is part of the Release and Deployment Management process.

Development: The process responsible for creating or modifying an IT service or application. Also used to mean the role or group that carries out development work.

Diagnostic Script: A structured set of questions used by Service Desk staff to ensure they ask the correct questions and to help them classify, resolve, and assign incidents. Diagnostic scripts may also be made available to users to help them diagnose and resolve their own incidents.

Early Life Support (ELS): Support provided for a new or changed IT service for a period of time after it is released. During the ELS period, IT Management may provide additional resources for Incident and Problem Management.

Effectiveness: A measure of whether the objects of a process, service or activity have been achieved.

Escalation: An activity that obtains, additional resources when these are needed to meet service level targets or Customer's expectations.

First-line Support: The first level in a hierarchy of the support groups involved in the resolution of incidents.

Functional Escalation: Transferring an incident, problem or change to a technical team with a higher level of expertise to assist in an Escalation.

HEAT: An out-of-the-box customer service and support call ticket and call logging solution, which enables organizations to streamline employee and customer support interactions.

Help Desk: A point of contact for users to log incidents. A Help Desk is usually more technically focused than a service desk and does not provide a single point of contact for all interactions. The term help desk is often used as a synonym for service desk. FACC uses the terms "Help Desk" and "Service Desk" interchangeably.

Incident: An unplanned interruption to an IT Service or a reduction in quality of an IT Service.

Incident Management: The process responsible for managing the lifecycle of all incidents.

Incident Record: A record containing the details of an incident.

IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL): A set of best practice guidance of IT service management. ITIL is owned by the British Office of Government Commerce (OGC) and consists of a series of publications giving guidance on the provisions of quality IT services, and on the processes and facilities needed to support them.

Known Error: a problem that has a documented root cause and a workaround. Known errors are created and managed throughout their lifecycle by Problem Management.

Lifecycle: The various stages in the life of an IT service, configuration item, incident, problem, change etc. The lifecycle defines the categories for status and the status transitions that are permitted.

Manual Workaround: A workaround that requires manual intervention. Manual workaround is also used as the name of a recovery option in which the business process operates without the use of IT services. This is a temporary measure and is usually combined with another recovery option.

Operation: Day-to-day management of an IT service, system or other configuration item. Operation is also used to mean any predefined activity or transaction.

Problem: A cause of one or more incidents. The cause is not usually known at the time a problem record is created, and the Problem Management process is responsible for further investigation.

Problem Management: The process responsible for managing the lifecycle of all problems. The primary objective of problem management is to prevent incidents from happening, and to minimize the impact of incidents that cannot be prevented.

Problem Record: A record containing the details of a Problem.

Process: A structured set of activities designed to accomplish a specific objective. A process takes one or more defined inputs and turns them into defined outputs. A process may include any of the roles, responsibilities, tools and management controls required to reliably deliver the outputs. A process may define policies, standards, guidelines, activities, and work instructions if they are needed.

Release: A collection of hardware, software, documentation, processes or other components required to implement one or more approved changes to IT Services. The contents of each Release are managed, tested and deployed as a single entity.

Release and Deployment Management: The process that is responsible for both the policy and planning of building and releasing software. Release Management is a proactive technical support focused on planning, preparation and deployment of services

Release Management: The process responsible for planning, scheduling and controlling the movement of releases to test and live environments. The primary objective of Release Management is to ensure that the integrity of the live environment is protected and that the correct components are released. Release Management is part of the Release and Deployment Management Process.

Request for Change (RFC): A formal process for a change to be made. A RFC includes details of the proposed changes, and may be recorded on paper or electronically.

Rollout: Synonym for Deployment. Most often used to refer to complex or phased deployments or deployments to multiple locations.

Second-line Support: The second level in a hierarchy of support groups involved in the resolution of incidents and investigation of problems.

Service Desk: A single point of contact between the service provider and the users. A typical service desk manages incidents and service requests, and also handles communication with the users. FACC uses the terms “Help Desk” and “Service Desk” interchangeably.

Service Request: A request from a user for information, advice, a standard change or for access to an IT service.

Scheduled Incident: The fourth and lowest level of impact. A scheduled incident is an incident that is being worked based upon an agreed to schedule.

Standard Incident: The third level of impact. A standard incident is a routine incident and has no impact to the customers operations.

Single Point of Contact: Providing a single consistent way to communicate with an organization or business unit.

System Management: The part of IT Service Management that focuses on the management of IT infrastructure rather than process.

Technical Management: The function responsible for providing technical skill in support of IT services and management of the IT Infrastructure. Technical Management defines the roles of support groups, as well as the tools, processes and procedures required.

Technology Assistance Program (TAP): TAP is a technical support team responsible for supporting customer’s onsite.

Test Environment: A controlled environment used to test configuration items, builds, IT services, processes, etc.

Third-line Support: The third level in a hierarchy of support groups involved in the resolution of incidents and investigation of problems.

Urgent Incident: The second level of impact. An urgent incident has a impact on one or more users but has a minimal impact to the customer’s operations.

Version: A version is used to identify a specific baseline of a configuration item. Version typically uses a naming convention that enables the sequence or date of each baseline to be identified. For example Traffic Application Version 3 contains updated functions from Version 2.

Workaround: Reducing or eliminating the impact of an incident or problem for which a full resolution is not yet available.

Policy

This policy focuses on our commitment to customer service by ensuring the recording of the life-cycle of incidents, problems, software and hardware release/deployment, and configuration management.

The objective of this policy is to improve and extend the overall service to customers and users. The Service Center's goal is to extend a range of services and offer a more globally-focused approach, allowing business processes to be integrated into the service management infrastructure.

The Service Center is the customer support team that supports the ePortal.

Functions of the Service Center:

- Ensure customer satisfaction
- Operate on the principle that customer satisfaction and perception is critical
- Blending people, processes and technology to deliver quality customer service
- Managing the incident (requests) lifecycle
- Making initial assessment of requests and attempting to resolve them
- Keeping the customer (user) informed of request status and progress
- Managing known errors – problem management
- Communicating planned and short-term changes- release/deployment
- Coordinating functional escalation
- Identifying customer training and education needs

Service Center support technologies include (but are not limited to) the following:

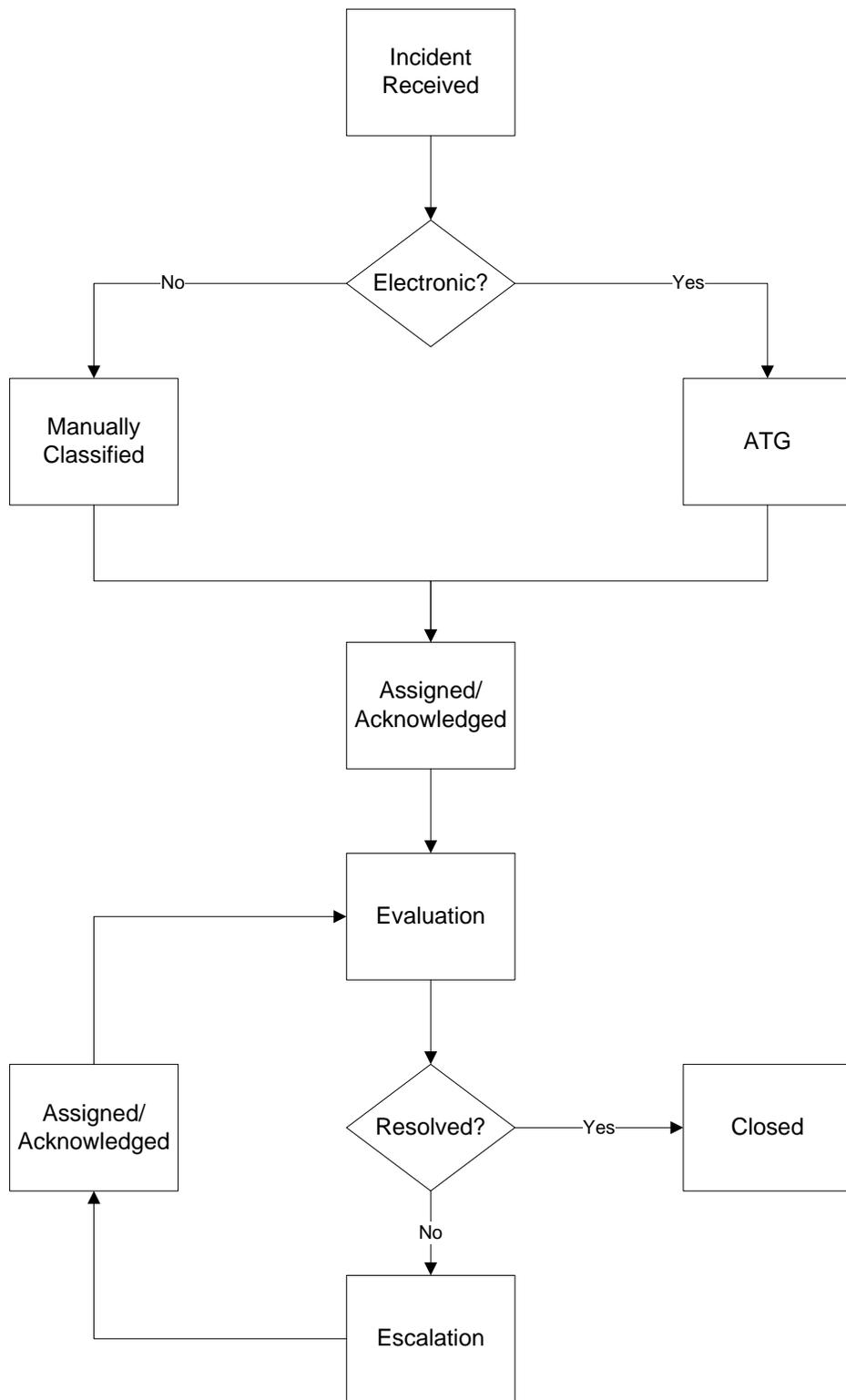
- HEAT
 - BPAM
 - HEAT voice
 - ATG
- Electronic mail (Internet and email system)
- Telephone system

Service Center availability

Customers can submit RFC's electronically or via voice message to the Service Center 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Currently incidents submitted electronically are automatically logged into the HEAT system. The Service Center staff is available Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. After hours service center support will be provided upon request or if appropriate. After hours 24/7 technical on-call support will be provided solely to insure that no unscheduled technical interruptions occur for the Portal.

Incident Escalation Process

- Incident
 - Electronic – automatically logged and categorized through ATG
 - Phone call - manually logged and categorized through Tier I
- Evaluated
- Assigned to a functional group or service area
- Acknowledged by staff
- Worked
- Resolved
- Or Escalated to User Forum Process



Based on the information provided by the customer, first-line support will determine the following:

Service Desk support levels:

- First-line support – Support Specialist I
- Second-line support – Tier I, Application Specialist I
- Third-line support – Tier II, Application Specialist II

Standard Acknowledgement requirements:

- Within a minimum of two (2) hours – required to be acknowledged by second-line support
- Within a minimum of four (4) hours – if incident is not acknowledged by second-line support an automated e-mail is sent to third-line support notifying them of the incident.
- Within a minimum of six (6) hours – if incident is not acknowledged by third-line support an automated e-mail is sent to the Support Administrator and the Service Center Manager.

Incident Closure:

- Upon resolution of the incident the customer is notified.
- If incident is validated as a legitimate RFC, the service desk will perform a functional escalation to the User Forum for Prioritization and Resolution.
- The initial incident record is closed and a RFC problem record is created. The problem record will be linked to the initial incident record by the control number. Once the problem record is resolved the service desk will notify the customer.

User Forum Process

Oversight

The Authority Board Chair shall select a Board Representative to manage the User Forum Process. The Board Representative shall perform the following tasks:

- Set overall priorities for all user requests
- Report on activities of the User Forum at each Authority Board Meeting
- Act as an escalation point for customers regarding issues with existing prioritizations

RFC Review Process

On a monthly basis, FACC ePortal Project Staff will review all open RFC's in the following manner:

RFC's will be classified as:

- Open Deficiency
- Open Enhancement
- Not Applicable for ePortal
- Resolved

Each RFC will be assigned a time period in which the RFC will be included in an ePortal Software Release. RFC's will be prioritized as follows:

- Mandated Item
- Multi-jurisdictional Impact
- Single County Request

Approval Process

After each month's prioritization, a comprehensive report of all open RFC's will be created and provided to the Authority Board for approval. This report will list each RFC and the assigned priority. Upon approval of this report, the report will be posted to the Authority Website for users to review.

All planned software releases of user forum requests are subject to budgetary availability.