



**ACR** – Administrative Code and Register Section  
 Robert J. Colborn, Jr. Innovation Award  
 2007 NOMINATION FORM

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Completely answer all questions. If a question does not apply, type "not applicable" in the space provided.  
 Nominations are due no later than June 15, 2007, and are selected by members of the Robert J. Colborn, Jr. Innovation Award Nomination Committee.

**NOMINATED PROGRAM INFORMATION**

<b>Title of Nomination</b>			<b>Date</b>
Code of Colorado Regulations Online Portal for e-Filing and Rule access			13 June 2007
<b>Project Program Manager</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Title</b>
	Candy	Herring	Administrative Rules Program Manager
<b>Name of ACR member on staff</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Title</b>
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<b>Agency</b>		<b>Department/DIVISION</b>	
Colorado Department of State		Licensing Division	
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<b>Phone Number (include area code)</b>		<b>Fax Number (include area code)</b>	
303-894-2200		303-869-4871	

**NOMINATOR'S INFORMATION (if different than above)**

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By submitting this form and nomination information you affirm you have read the Nomination Packet and affirm that:

- The information submitted is truthful and does not infringe on any copyright;
- None of the information included in this nomination, including the executive summary or statement of justification is confidential, proprietary, or a trade secret.

**Please submit the following information with this nomination form:**

- An executive summary and statement of justification as outlined in the Robert J. Colborn, Jr. Innovation Award Nomination Packet. Submit this nomination form and the information above to: scancelosi@azsos.gov

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**Executive Summary**

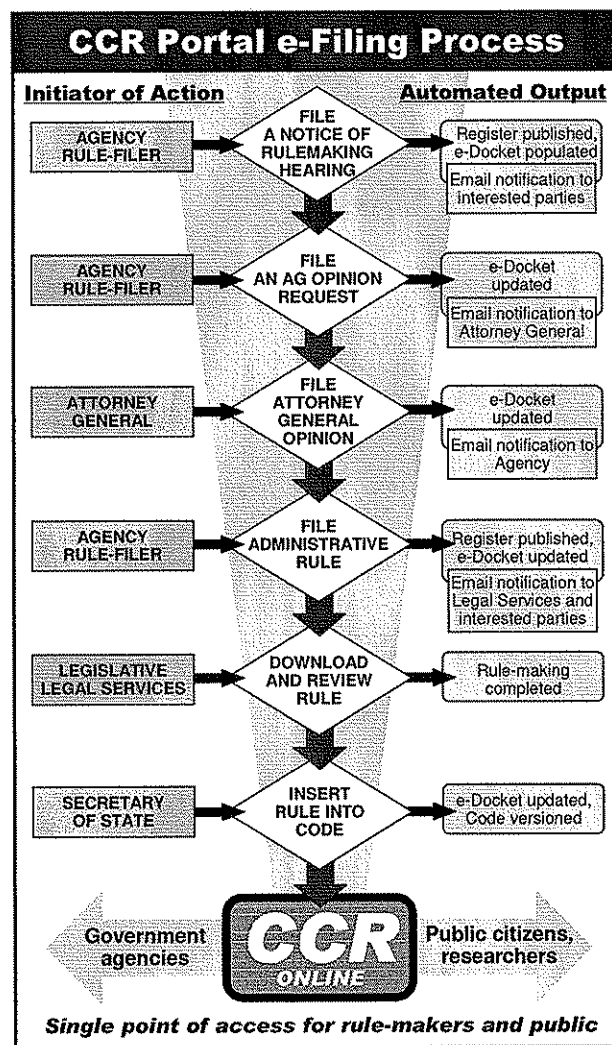
*The goal of the project* was to launch the Code of Colorado Regulations online. The vision was to create a platform that could provide content to a multitude of users while allowing the content providers, governmental agencies, to more quickly and efficiently deliver their content. This vision came to life on January 1, 2006 when the system went live and received its first e-filing four days later. Poised to be anointed the “Official” administrative code for Colorado on July 1, 2007, the system has evolved into a preeminent portal offering numerous services and benefits for a multitude of users.

*The benefits from this program* have been far reaching. They include:

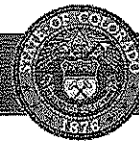
1. Unparalleled access to the Code of Colorado Regulations.
2. The ability to view prior and future versions of the rule.
3. An innovative e-Docket portal that aids legal research.
4. Online forms that enforce statutory rule-filing requirements.
5. Increased efficiency and accuracy for users.
6. Uniform format and structure never adhered to in the paper world.

*The online rules* and electronic rule-making program has had a major effect on the improvement of and the operation of state government in Colorado. Its all-encompassing plan to completely remove paper from the rule-making and rule-publishing process utilizes relational databases and a dedicated universally accessible web interface to allow the filing and tracking of the administrative rules and all associated documents.

*The program has been highly effective* at accomplishing all of the originally established benchmarks and continues to evolve and adapt as the community of stakeholders learn to utilize the system. This effectiveness stems in part from the development of a strong but flexible structure that can be modified as the requirements of the users evolve. This flexibility works hand in hand with the participation of the stakeholder partners who continue to be involved in refining and detailing the various aspects of the system which they utilize. This partnership has been one of the greatest strengths of the new CCR program, and is integral to its overarching vision.



*Work has already begun* on second generation modifications to expand and clarify information available in the e-Docket and Register, as well as adjust filing and publishing deadlines for easier use. It is clear that the Colorado Secretary of State has successfully married rule-making and technology to make government more efficient and our varied constituent base more involved, informed, and effective.



**Introduction**

The Colorado general assembly mandated in 2002 that the secretary of state put the administrative rules online. The secretary of state took this seemingly simple statement and made it a mission. The secretary envisioned a site that provided the public unfettered access to the administrative rules and register while streamlining the process whereby content providers, or governmental agencies, could easily provide the information people were seeking.

This ambitious project was intended to accomplish the following goals:

- ◆ Provide the public with online access to the code and register.
- ◆ Allow agencies to file rule-making documents electronically.
- ◆ Accommodate the disparate numbering systems of the various agencies.
- ◆ Allow the Attorney General to view the filings and create AG opinions.
- ◆ Allow the secretary of state and Legislative Legal Services to receive electronic filings and related data.
- ◆ Provide a record of filings that is accessible to all users and the public.
- ◆ Enable fast and efficient research.

Today, that vision has become a reality. The Colorado Secretary of State’s portal not only established the rules online, but it also revolutionized the way Colorado does business. Far exceeding the expectations of the general assembly, this forward thinking portal utilizes state-of-the-art technology to provide all types of constituents with wide access to the administrative code and register.

<b>PROJECT TIMELINE From Paper to Online Portal</b>	
<b>2002</b>	Request for Proposals sent to vendors.
<b>Jan-Oct 2003</b>	Vendor selected, fails. Second vendor selected
<b>Early 2004</b>	Print rules converted to XML. Development begins on eFiling system.
<b>June 2004</b>	Vendor misses deadline for project completion.
<b>June/July 2005</b>	Vendor hands off unfinished code to SOS - IT continues development in-house.
<b>Fall 2005</b>	Database migrated from DB2 to Informix.
<b>Dec-Jan 2005</b>	Conversion module falters due to MS Office 2003 upgrade -SOS IT resolves issues.
<b>Jan 2006</b>	Migration from paper to e-Filing begins (dual filing in place for 6 months).
<b>Mar 2006</b>	SOS staff begins to insert amendments in the form of approximately 2000 files aggregated from 2004-2006.
<b>July 2006</b>	End of Paper filing, e-Filing system stands alone.
<b>Nov 2006</b>	Register comes online.
<b>Dec 2006</b>	The Code rolls out to public.
<b>July 2007</b>	Online CCR becomes only official source for administrative rules.

**Description**

The Colorado Secretary of State’s office began to develop online filing and publication of the state administrative rules and register in 2002. An advisory board comprised of a broad array of constituents was convened to begin articulating what the system ought to do. Early in the drafting process, it became clear that the site would have to be multifaceted to serve several different types of constituents coming to the system with different needs. Furthermore, the system would have to be adaptable enough to host data from numerous government agencies with different styles and approaches to writing rules. Finally, the site had to make the promulgating process transparent and comprehensible so the general public could use it. With these parameters in mind, a portal was constructed that provides the following:

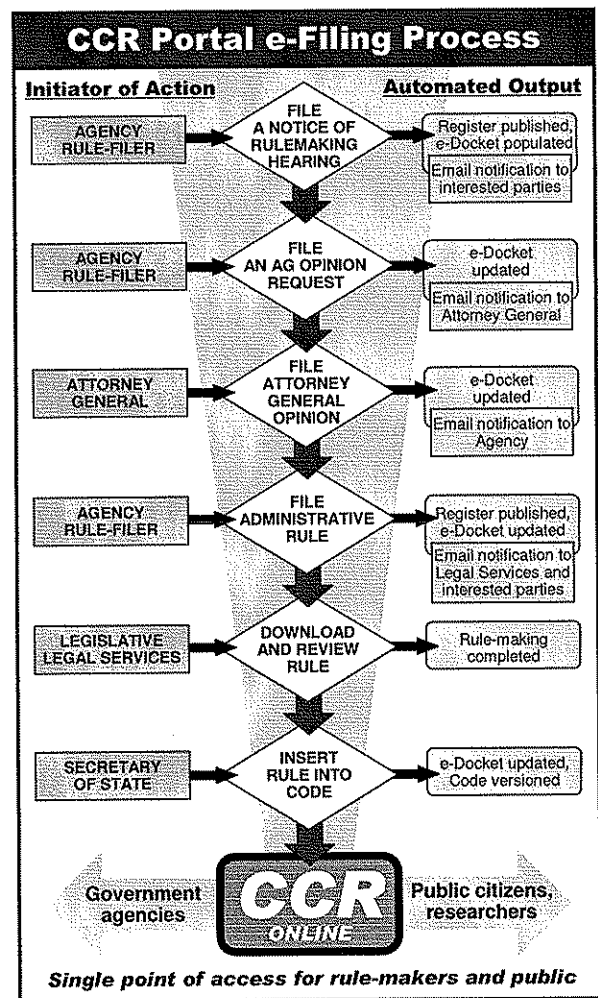
1. **The program streamlines the process whereby intergovernmental agencies file rules.** The portal has made government more efficient by allowing agencies to file rules electronically. Previously, governmental agencies were required to steward reams of paper through a multi-staged approval process. The portal has done away with this process. Instead the site acts as the single depository for the rule, from inception to completion. When the rule is filed with the secretary of state, a domino effect is set in motion: approval agencies are automatically notified of pending approvals, constituents who signed up for alerts are automatically notified, the Colorado register is automatically updated, and so on.



2. **Adaptability of the system avoids additional expenditures by governmental agencies.** Adaptability is one of the system’s hallmarks. The portal is designed to accommodate governmental agencies that employ different methods for creating rules. Under the Colorado system, agencies continue to use their traditional method for drafting the rules. The site does the work of transforming those rules into XML. As a result, agencies are not burdened with purchasing additional software or training employees to craft rules in XML for the site.
3. **The system accommodates the official version of the administrative rules at no charge to constituents.** The site is primed to become the sole provider of the official version of the Code of Colorado Regulations and Colorado Register. This function was previously delegated to a third party who charged users to utilize content generated by state agencies. With the official code posted to the site, users are permitted to access content free of charge.

4. **The CCR Portal allows easy access to rule-making process and related documents through the innovative e Docket.** The e Docket is a centralized source for all relevant materials regarding the rule. It’s like the schedule board in a busy train station. Except in this case, clicking on the train number would give you the number of cars, type of car, and who’s driving the train. Accordingly the e Docket is the single stop for a constituent to learn the name of the rule, the agency proposing it, its purpose and objective, the agency’s contact information, a short description of the rule, the date of the rule-making hearing, and links to the proposed rule itself and the AG opinion. The e Docket is automatically updated when rules are filed with the secretary of state.

5. **The system provides search tools, personalized automated e-mails, and a unique history function.** Interested parties can customize the site to receive automated e-mails as rules of interest pass through the rule-making process. Researchers can drill through the layers of rule revisions to discover previous and even future versions of the rule. The “History” function facilitates legal research by displaying the rule as it was when the case or controversy arose. Additionally, constituents can utilize the “Search” function to find keyword, topics and rules quickly.



**Project Scope**

The online rules and electronic rule-making program has had a major influence on the improvement of the operation of state government in Colorado. Its far-reaching and all-encompassing plan to completely remove paper from the rule-making and rule-publishing process utilizes relational databases and a dedicated universally accessible web interface to allow the filing and tracking of the administrative rules and all associated documents.



Although other aspects of government operation may be more obviously public or headline-oriented, administrative rules are one of the quiet “backbone” structures that help keep government running smoothly. The new rules program in Colorado significantly improves the ability for any interested or involved parties not only to view the current and previous versions of the Code of Colorado Regulations, but also to view the register and related documents submitted during the rule-making process, all through one web-site.

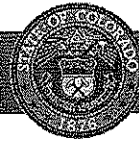
The program has been highly effective at accomplishing all of the originally established benchmarks and continues to evolve and adapt as the community of stakeholders learn to utilize the system. This effectiveness stems in part from the development of a strong but flexible structure that can be modified as the requirements of the users evolve. This flexibility works hand in hand with the participation of the stakeholder partners who continue to be involved in refining and detailing the various aspects of the system which they utilize. This partnership has been one of the greatest strengths of the new CCR program, and is integral to its over-arching vision.

**Practical Application.** The online rules and rule-making system apply to all aspects of state government that influence or are influenced by administrative rules. The management and operation of the rule-making and publishing process have been improved across the board. The service provided to state agencies increases governmental efficiency and environmental sensitivity, while adding value and usefulness. The effects are felt in very practical ways:

1. **Automated Rule Filing:** The agencies no longer hand-deliver rules documents. E-Filing and the e-Docket simplify procedures, save time, cut costs, and ensure all parties are working from the same files. The system saves entered data at each step in the process and tracks the progress of filings, saving time and greatly reducing the possibility of errors.
2. **Adaptive Numbering:** Agencies are not required to adhere to a standard numbering system for administrative rules, although they are required to use standardized styles to format their documents. This allows our XML structure to convert the submitted documents for a more uniform online presentation, and produces better written rules in the process.
3. **Automated Accessibility:** Public users as well as government users can easily access the complete administrative code, view the Register, and sign up for automatic email notification of activity on filings of interest via the CCR online portal. This unprecedented access to all rules and rule-making materials affords a new magnitude of service.

The vision of this project was, from its inception, comprehensive and ambitious: not only to publish administrative rules online, but to reorganize and restructure the entire process of rule-making from start to finish, streamlining and making more uniform the documents and forms, and the procedure itself, and to establish an ongoing partnership with stakeholders and incorporate their requirements. This breadth of influence and participation signifies that, much like the administrative rules themselves, the new program impacts virtually every part of government, and improves its operation.

**Unique Approach.** While the need to employ electronic filing and publishing of administrative rules is not unique, the approach taken in Colorado’s program has been and continues to be innovative and unique in the willingness and desire to involve all the constituents of the Rules community in both the initial development and the ongoing evolution of the system. Since the program significantly impacts and im-



proves the rule-making and publishing process for such a diverse group of participants, their partnership in the program was, of course, desirable. Historically such communication and involvement, especially across such a wide range of entities, has been challenging. However, this program has had great success with engaging rule-making agencies, the AG's office, OLLS, and even professional researchers in its development, which gave all the stakeholders a better understanding of, and interaction with the other participants in the rule-making and publishing process. This interlaced network of feedback and communication continues to enhance and improve the administrative rules program in Colorado.

## **Benefits**

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The multifaceted portal for the state administrative rules has been developed to serve a variety of constituents. Government agencies, the legal community, and the general public can now easily view the rules and register and participate in the rule-making process. When developing the system, it was discovered that the varied needs of the user groups required customized interfaces and special features. Many of the features built into the eRules web application were intentionally created to benefit users. However, it has been discovered that users have derived several unintentional benefits as well. Listed below is an array of user benefits:

1. **Unparalleled public access in the state of Colorado – public at large and researchers.** Both the search capability and the versioning were built into the system to allow for easier research. Because the rules reside in an XML database, user queries search the entire code. In many cases, users will need information on a specific topic and will not realize that more than one agency deals with that topic. By searching the entire code, users receive a more complete picture of the specific information they are seeking.
2. **Users can view prior versions of the rule and receive an unintended benefit.** Commonly in litigation, the rules applicable to a case have changed requiring laborious research to view a prior version of the rules. Our system makes researching past and future versions easy. The moment amendments are inserted into the CCR, the system automatically archives the prior version. Users can easily view prior versions by selecting the "History" link located above the text of each CCR section. The "History" window then opens to reveal a list of prior and future versions of the CCR rule section. The future versions are an example of one of the unintentional benefits. Future versions exist when SOS processes a rule filing before the effective date. When the effective date arrives, the web application automatically rolls-over to the current version. This is a much tidier and effective solution than trying to cope with two versions of a rule in print.
3. **Innovative e-Docket portal aids legal research:** The e-Docket is another of the tools built into the system that supports research. The enabling statute requires that a log of rule filings be maintained by the system. The e-Docket serves as a log that lists the tracking number, agency, CCR number, CCR title, type of filing and dates that various filing events occur. By selecting the "tracking-number" link, it becomes much more than a log. Through the use of tracking numbers, this rule making portal allows all the documents filed during the rule-making process to be accessed from a single location. What can now be viewed and downloaded in minutes online, would have been prohibitive in terms of cost and time in the paper world.
4. **Online forms contain additional aids for agency rule filers.** E-Filing has relieved agency filers of many of the responsibilities of remembering all the dates and deadlines associated with rules filings. In the Notice form, for example, the hearing date field populates with the earliest date that a hearing



can be held. In the past, agency filers would sometimes select hearing dates that were less than twenty days after publication of the notice and in doing so violated statutory filing requirements. In the paper world, this error would not be discovered until after the filing date for publication in the register had passed, which would mean that the agency would have to reschedule their hearing and could miss the deadline for having the rules in place. Our innovative new system eliminates this problem. The required fields within each form correspond to the filing requirements listed in the Administrative Procedure Act, while constraints prevent users from entering inappropriate data. The system saves entered data at each step in the process thus saving time and greatly reducing the possibility of errors. Email alerts remind agency rule filers as well as the Attorney General and Legal Services that action is required, thereby expediting the process and eliminating missed deadlines. Additionally, electronic documents are stored in a safe repository and cannot be misplaced or misfiled as agency personnel changes.

5. **Users experience increased efficiency and accuracy.** In Colorado, Attorney General Opinions are basically form letters. E-Filing saves the AG time by creating the opinions from an online template and by auto-populating the following fields: tracking number, agency, adopted date, CCR section number, CCR section title, date AG Opinions request was submitted, and it dates the letter with the date it is issued. Once the rule amendments have been reviewed by the state attorney, it takes the click of a mouse to issue the opinion. Typographical and clerical errors have virtually been eliminated and because the signature is embedded in the template, there is no possibility of an unsigned opinion. The Attorney General's web interface is customized with the data pertinent to their processes to enable the user to tell at a glance what work needs to be done. Furthermore, e-Filing automatically tracks which opinions have been issued. Both the Office of Legislative Legal Services and the Secretary of States office that administers the program have attained similar efficiencies.
6. **Electronic filing imposes structure and uniformity.** Web applications require a certain amount of uniformity to enable the system to work properly. As a result, the code and register now have a more uniform look. This was another unintended byproduct of the system. In print, the rules appeared in varying font styles and sizes and each agency had their own style/template for notices. While agencies are still allowed to use their own numbering schemes, the font and style for the headings and text of rules are now unvarying throughout the code. Using web forms to file notices to be published in the register, has resulted in a standardized appearance for the notices as well. Moreover, the required fields on the forms prevent users from omitting vital information. Throughout the website uniformity prevails.

## **Conclusion**

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Moving forward, the CCR program continues to grow and develop, always aspiring to provide excellent service for all those who utilize the administrative rules or the rule-making process. Work has already begun on second generation modifications to expand and clarify information available in the e-Docket and Register, as well as adjusting filing and publishing deadlines for easier use.

Although transitioning to electronic filing has presented some challenges, it is unlikely that any of the system users would be willing to go back to filing in print. As time goes by, users will wonder how their jobs were possible without the online filing system. It is clear that the Colorado Secretary of State has successfully married rule-making and technology to make government more efficient and our varied constituent base more involved, informed, and effective.