



HFSC Launches Improved Website Containing Trial Documents

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The Houston Forensic Science Center launched Wednesday a new and improved website designed to allow attorneys and other members of the public to easily access documents they commonly need for trial.

The new website, which can be accessed from HFSC's website www.houstonforensicscience.org, is searchable, allowing attorneys to look for their documents using key words, search terms and filters. It can be accessed from HFSC's website, www.houstonforensicscience.org, under the "About Us" dropdown menu or at the bottom, left-hand corner of the Home Page.

Until now, the website has not been searchable and attorneys had to look for their documents by section. The searchable format is meant to make it easier for attorneys to locate the information they need.

The electronic system helps HFSC fulfill its mission of transparency, and allows both prosecutors and defense attorneys to access many documents that once required a court order to receive.

This "eDiscovery" website houses corrective action reports and standard operating procedures for all of the Center's disciplines. Case-specific information is not available on the public website. That information can be obtained by sending an email to HFSC's Client Services & Case Management Division (CS/CM) at triage@houstonforensicscience.org.

“This new, searchable document warehouse is meant to make it easier for prosecutors and defense attorneys to independently find and download documents they need for court,” said Dr. Peter Stout, HFSC’s president and CEO.

HFSC is a local government corporation that provides forensic services to the City of Houston and other local agencies. HFSC is overseen by a Board of Directors appointed by the Mayor of Houston and confirmed by the Houston City Council. Its management structure is designed to be responsive to a 2009 recommendation by the National Academy of Sciences that called for crime laboratories to be independent of law enforcement and prosecutorial branches of government.

HFSC currently has eight forensic sections.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Ramit Plushnick-Masti

Director of Communications>PIO

media@houstonforensicscience.org

713-929-6768 (office)

713-703-4898 (cell)

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