



**DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**  
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## *Regulations Modernization*

<b>Category</b>	Government to Business
<b>State</b>	Connecticut
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<b>Project Initiation</b>	January 2013
<b>End Date</b>	July 15, 2015 (portal go-live date)

## Executive Summary

The State of Connecticut had a time consuming, manual process for tracking and publishing changes to the Regulations of the State. The Governor's Office, the Office of Policy and Management, the Secretary of the State and the Department of Administrative Services jointly created and managed a project to transform this outdated and inefficient process to a modern, all-electronic regulations tracking application.

The Connecticut eRegulations System (<https://eregulations.ct.gov/eRegsPortal>) is an efficient, end-to-end electronic workflow for drafting, reviewing and publishing agency regulations and tracking regulation-making activity. The system advances government efficiency and transparency with online publishing of real-time updates to the regulation record, automatic email notifications, and a public forum to submit comments.

The system reduces drafting errors, improves public access to draft regulations and produces final, print-ready documents from a streamlined application built with modern document management and publishing tools.

## Concept:

Five years ago, the regulation-making process in Connecticut had fallen out of the public view. Paper was still the required medium for circulating the proposed regulation during the approval process. Public notices were printed in the *Connecticut Law Journal*, a judicial branch publication rarely found outside the legal community. Approved regulations were filed with the Secretary of the State, but all supporting documents were kept by the agency and subject to a hodgepodge of recordkeeping practices. The compiled regulatory code, *Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (RCSA)*, was also not easy to find unless you visited a law library or paid for a pricey, subscription-based service.

It was generally acknowledged that the State needed to "get them online". But simply making the regulations accessible through the web was not enough. That step that was completed in 2012, when pdf files for the *RCSA* were posted on the Secretary's website. However, since those documents were published from scanned documents, they were not searchable nor easily accessible without other assistive technology.

After initially publishing the regulations, two large problems remained: How could the state make the regulation-making process more visible to citizens and businesses and how could the state streamline the initial creation and ongoing upkeep of these critical legal documents?

Two task forces tried and failed. In 2012, Public Act 12-92 created a third and ultimately successful taskforce, this one led by a partnership created among the Governor's Office, the Secretary's Office, the Office of Policy and Management and the Department of Administrative Services / Bureau of Enterprise Services and Technology. The goal was to move Connecticut from having the poorest regulation accessibility in the country to the best.

The task force started by investigating other states to determine what worked and what didn't. Problems were identified and recommendations made: records should be compiled in one location, postings needed to be centralized, automate as much as possible, and most importantly, make it all accessible to the public.

In 2013, the State selected a proposal by Fairfax Data Systems that leveraged existing state document management technology. Design sessions included all major actors: agencies, reviewing entities, attorneys, law librarians. The State included the University of Connecticut in the process; they were building a digital archive for the State Library, just in time to help the eRegulations system meet newly enacted UELMA requirements.

By the end of 2014, the State had a one-stop shop -- the Connecticut eRegulations System. The system went live March 23, 2015, when all state agencies were required to start using the system for new regulations. While the system was being populated with data, final touches were added to the public web portal, and launched public access on July 15th, 2015.

Total investment costs for the system were \$1.5 million. The State was able to reduce spending for third party publishing and subscription fees by \$34,000 per year and has also significantly reduced the time to produce standard, accessible regulations.

**Significance:**

The innovation of this system relies on its end to end design. It was built utilizing enterprise technologies that were tailored to accommodate state-specific regulation drafting rules, workflow and publication requirements. The backbone of the system is IBM FileNet P8, an enterprise content management system already in use by the state in many other business areas.

During the approval process, the regulation and supporting documents are uploaded and routed through a workflow and review process defined and managed with IBM Case Manager, which interacts with the content database. Users login to IBM Case Manger to add or modify documents, review documents, and make decision regarding approvals. Security features manage what users can see and do. Email notifications alert users to activity regarding their cases.

The content and activity generated during the regulation approval workflow are posted to a public web portal, [eregulations.ct.gov](http://eregulations.ct.gov), loosely modeled on the federal [regulations.gov](http://regulations.gov) site. The web portal provides real-time updates of regulation-making activity and online access to documents in the regulation-making record. Public users can establish accounts though the public web portal to receive email notifications and submit comments.

Regulations are drafted and edited as DITA XML files using an XML editing software. DITA XML has a structured document schema that was tailored to enforce our regulation drafting rules. Quark XML Author is a Microsoft Word add-in that allows users to draft the DITA XML document without having to learn XML. Users can either create new regulations, or download an existing file to amend a regulation without having to re-create that existing content. The use of this tool was critical for the success of the project since it allowed those users that were drafting regulations to continue to use familiar tools yet produce a structured document.

Quark XML Author works with Quark Publishing Platform to automatically create readable PDF and HTML versions from the XML files. Codification happens through an automated routine that reviews the XML markup and rapidly generates new PDF and HTML content for the web portal.

In addition, once adoption and codification are complete, a simple automated process using secure ftp sends all regulation XML, PDF and supporting document files for ingestion into the Connecticut Digital Archive, which allows us to comply with the permanent access and preservation requirements of UELMA.

**Impact:**

The Connecticut eRegulations System has been effective in achieving efficiency for the state by:

- standardizing drafting and editing processes,
- automating of approval workflows,
- managing document creation, publication and archiving

This end-to-end regulation management was implemented by augmenting existing state technology and requiring minimal additional staff. At the same time, we have achieved government transparency for the public with access to a free, online, updated version of the *Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies*, permanent and real-time access to all agency regulation-making records, user-friendly search and browse, and citizen engagement tools like regulation tracking and online comment submission.

Regulatory drafting and processes are different in every state. Our research has indicated that many states use a manual and cumbersome process. The basic architecture of the Connecticut eRegulations System provides a template for consolidating management and publication of government laws, rules and regulations which could be tailored to a wide range of varying municipal, state, legislative or agency requirements.