



Not Checking E-Mail Costs Lawyer \$35,000

Last month a [lawyer in Philadelphia](#) lost his right to pursue a \$35,000 fee claim because he did not receive electronic notice of the scheduled arbitration. The ruling is on appeal, so there is a small chance the lawyer will ultimately be able to argue his claim. In the meantime, take heed: if you practice in e-Court, you **must** learn the technology.

In the [Philadelphia](#) case, the lawyer relied on his wife, who was also his secretary, to retrieve and read e-mail. When she broke her arm and was out of the office for an extended period, the lawyer simply allowed e-mail to accumulate. He made no alternative arrangements to retrieve e-mail, failed to hire a temporary secretary during his wife's absence, and did not know how to use Philadelphia's e-court system to view upcoming docket activity. To further aggravate matters, the lawyer did not inform the court of his inability to access e-mail.

I have written before about [e-Court best practices](#) and [the perils of sticking your head in the sand](#). Watch this blog next Tuesday for an important reminder about spam filters and e-Court.

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Note:

To obtain the six-page opinion in the Philadelphia case, reference *Knox v. Patterson*, PICS No. 11-0256, available from [Pennsylvania Law Weekly](#). Many thanks to Amaris Elliott-Engel who broke this story on [The Legal Intelligencer](#) in her post *Not Checking E-Mail Costs Attorney the Right to Arbitrate* February 16, 2011.

Originally posted February 18, 2011 at

<http://oregonlawpracticemanagement.wordpress.com/2011/02/18/not-checking-e-mail-costs-lawyer-35000/>