

Date of Hearing: April 15, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

AB 1951 (Dixon) – As Amended March 19, 2026

Policy Committee: Judiciary

Vote: 12 - 0

Urgency: No

State Mandated Local Program: No

Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill modernizes court filing fee statutes by applying existing procedures for insufficient payments and voided filings to credit cards, electronic fund transfers, and other electronic payment methods accepted by the court, and requires refunds to include a transaction identifier for traceability.

FISCAL EFFECT:

Minor and absorbable costs to trial courts (Trial Court Trust Fund, General Fund). According to the Judicial Council, the bill is consistent with existing court practices and many courts are likely already in compliance. The bill does not require statewide system changes. Any costs would be limited to ensuring courts notify parties when filings will be voided for insufficient electronic payments and maintaining a record of the transaction when refunding fees. The Judicial Council reports no operational or fiscal concerns with the bill.

COMMENTS:

Existing filing fee statutes were written when most fees were paid by paper check. The bill updates these statutes to reflect modern electronic payment and filing practices, ensuring that procedures for insufficient payments, voided filings, and refunds apply consistently regardless of payment method. Existing law sets forth procedures for when filing fee payments are incomplete or checks are returned for insufficient funds — the clerk notifies the party, imposes an administrative charge, and provides 20 days to cure before voiding the filing. These procedures currently reference only paper checks. This bill extends the same procedures and timelines to credit card payments, ACH transactions, and other electronic payment methods. The bill also requires courts to include a transaction identifier with any refund to improve traceability, addressing a problem identified by e-Filing Service Providers who have difficulty matching electronic refunds to the original filing.

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