Understanding File Locks

This guide is intended to provide an overview of File Locks within the system, what causes them and how they can be released.

What are File Locks?
When a user is working within a file, the File Lock functionality within the RL6 application locks the file so that it is only editable for one user at a time preventing the overwriting and loss of data.

How do File Locks work?
When a user opens a file, a File Lock is created in the RL6 database. When another user attempts to access the same locked file, a message stating that the file can only be opened in read-only mode will be displayed. When the first user exits the file the File Lock is released making the file editable to other users again.

What can cause a file to lock incorrectly?
When in a file, if the user's session ends abnormally, such as when the browser closes while a file is open, the computer powers off, the network connection is lost or the user navigates to a non-RL6 page using the address bar, the file will remain locked. Opening the application in multiple tabs can also cause issues. The period the file stays locked depends on the User Session timeout set in the web config file. The default session timeout period set currently is approximately 60 minutes.

Example
When a Manager (A) is working on a file, the file locks. If another Manager (B) attempts to access the file while it is locked by Manager A, Manager B will only be able to access the file in read-only mode, editing will not be possible. The correct way to unlock the file is to exit using the Save & Exit or Exit buttons in a file.

Then if Manager A is pulled away from the computer or works on another web page on the computer, the file stays locked for 60 mins. If the session continues to be inactive, the session timeouts and the file unlocks after 60 mins. Manager A might lose the data entered if they have not saved the file. If Manager A gets back to the desk within 60 mins and starts updating the file, their session renews, and the file continues to stay locked. It is highly recommended that the users get into the habit of saving the file frequently or as soon as they enter in any new data.

Clearing File Locks

However, there are rare instances where a file can stay locked indefinitely, and that is primarily when the application is interrupted by what is known as an "app pool restart" or something similar (backend). In that case the lock is indefinite and requires a System Admin to delete it. Note that every night at 3 am EST/EDT, the application will do this restart for several minutes. Anyone in PEER at the time will automatically get locked out of the file. There is no current method for us to avoid this restart, as it must be done daily, and we have tried to do it at a time when there is the least chance of someone getting kicked out of the file. We recommend you make your night shift aware of this nightly restart at 3 am so that they do not lose their work and lock the file indefinitely.

What to do when a file locks: The first step is to simply wait out the 60-minute recycle period and have it clear out automatically. If the lock doesn't automatically clear within that period, please contact your System Administrators, Linda Durbin and Carolyn Wollman. Please email both Linda (durbin@fsainfo.org) and Carolyn (wollman@fsainfo.org) so that they can get it done as quickly as possible for you. Please also feel free to call FSA at 215-646-0720.