

























LETTER FROM YOUR CLERK OF COURTS

Moving Forward to Provide Better Service and Access



As we reflect on another year, what stands out the most is how quickly technology in our world is changing. Because of that, my office is also evolving to take advantage of these advancements to provide better customer service and access to justice.

The Orange County Clerk of Courts is always working on innovative ways to move forward in this digital age to make doing business with us easier.

For example, in this report, you will see how my office has added appointments to make it easier for customers to get a new passport, marriage license, or to plan a wedding ceremony. All this can be done directly from the convenience of a computer, smart phone, or tablet.

We also have expanded online payments to include criminal fines and fees and added a court hearing calendar to our website to help people find any upcoming court hearing, date, time, and location without having to make a phone call.

And by year end, my office launched our "shopping cart" feature that allows customers to purchase a packet or multiple packets of forms for Civil and Family legal matters. Customers can also now order and pay online for copies of court records and documents, both certified and non-certified.

My office also continues to make serving the community a priority. We continue to host free legal forums on a variety of topics including child support, domestic violence, and mental health. Our Self Help Centers also provide low cost attorney consultations by appointment for matters involving Family Law, Small Claims and Residential Evictions.

We continue to progress to keep up with our digital age, and I am excited about what the future holds as my office looks for cutting-edge ways to continue to enhance our customers' experience and provide affordable access to justice.





Orange

Clerk Russell Honored with Summit Award and as a Woman of the Year

Courtesy of the Orange Appeal Magazine

Orange Appeal Magazine recently selected Clerk Russell as one of their Women of the Year, featuring her story as a talented active female leader who was born and raised in Orange County. The founder and editor of the magazine described Clerk Russell as one of six "brave, bold, and dynamic women in Central Florida recognized as accomplished, articulate, and passionate." Clerk Russell was honored to be recognized for her role in serving and giving back to the community.

The Women's Resource Center also recognized Clerk Russell with a Summit Award, which honors women who have given countless hours of diverse community service, whose service goes beyond job related responsibilities, and has led to the betterment and good of our local community. The Summit Awards is one of the largest of its kind in Central Florida and attracts over 200 of the community's "movers and shakers."



OUR STRATEGY TO SERVE

2017-2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

The Clerk's Office is in the last year of its current strategic plan and our focus is always to elevate the customer experience, serve, and provide access. A few of the results of that plan include our website shopping cart, online payment options, and less paper initiative. This year we will be back in the planning phase to develop our strategy for the next three years 2020-2023.

Our Mission ~ To maintain court records and provide our global community and partners access to related services with transparency and integrity.

Our Vision ~ We are a leading organization that elevates the customer experience, leverages technology, and fosters community partnerships all through an engaged workforce.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

OUR OBJECTIVES



COMMUNITY & SOCIAL ISSUES

Offer programs and services to address community needs



CUSTOMER SERVICE

Enhance the customer experience with a holistic approach



EMPLOYEE FOCUS

Align our workforce with the needs of the organization



TECHNOLOGY

Explore innovative technological solutions



LEGISLATIVE

Proactively effect changes that provide value



EFFECTIVENESS

Standardize processes to gain efficiency



FINANCIAL

Maximize use of our financial resources

Collaboration
OPEN &
ENGAGING

C

Community Focus SERVING & PROVIDING ACCESS V

Valued
Workforce
DIVERSE
CONTRIBUTION

Innovation
ENHANCEMENT
& ABILITY

P

Professionalism
CARING &
RESPECT



ALL ABOUT OUR CUSTOMERS

CLERK OF THE FUTURE — LOOK HOW FAR WE'VE COME

We live in a day and age where technology is advancing at a rapid pace, and the Clerk's Office is busy working to leverage this digital world so it's easier and more convenient for you to do business with us. You don't have to look far to see how far we've come!

Our innovations allow you to look at court records and hearing dates right from your computer, tablet or phone. You can also make payments and schedule an appointment from any "smart" device. And with our shopping cart, you can purchase forms and documents online.

Another example is our less paper initiative. Since we maintain all court records, it wasn't that long ago everything in a court case had to be printed. Now just about everything is electronic.

In late 2017, all Orange County courtrooms went file-less. That meant that all those electronic documents no longer need to be printed and assembled into paper files and then carted in and out of court

This milestone was reached after our office stopped printing paper from the Clerks' E-filing portal which enables electronic filing of case

Over the years, we have reduced our annual paper usage by 2,160,000 sheets, which equals a cost savings of nearly \$17,000 a year.

Also of great importance is the positive ecological impact. According to Conservatree, a nonprofit catalyst and advocate for ecologically sustainable paper markets, one tree makes 8,333 sheets of copy paper. Using that calculation, we have already saved 1554 trees and will continue to save at least an additional 259 trees each year as a result of this initiative.

The next phase of our less paper initiative will eventually eliminate printed copies we send stakeholders and partners such as the State Attorney's Office, Public Defender, and bondsmen. Instead, correspondence will be accomplished digitally. Our staff is constantly thinking and moving forward in order to be the "Clerk of the Future".

Analytics and Living in a Digital World

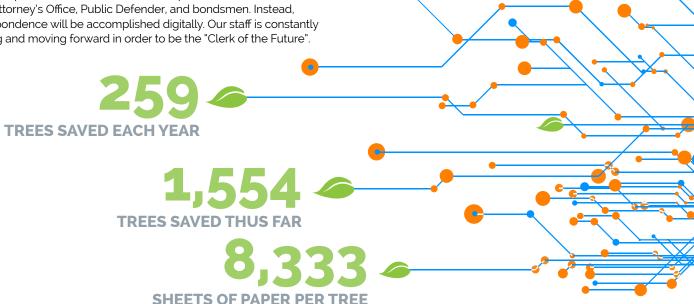
We are moving into a world where just about every interaction can be captured, stored, displayed, and measured. To that end, the Clerk's Office took a big step in the direction of data analytics by establishing the Court Operations Analytics Team to lead that charge.

This team works across different divisions in our operations to increase consistency in how we approach everything we do. Each of the five Court Operations Analysts is also imbedded in a business unit for a portion of their workweek to continue to strengthen and leverage their subject matter expertise. The team delivers results for initiatives at the divisional level as well as the state level, to include Process Improvement Initiatives, Portfolio Projects, and State Reporting and Case Maintenance System updates when new laws are implemented.

With a team dedicated to robust analytics, we can see where we've been and where we need to go in the future.

ANNUAL PAPER USAGE REDUCED BY

YEARLY SAVINGS OF NEARLY



TRANSFORMING VIA TECHNOLOGY

YOUR TIME IS VALUABLE

Even with all of today's "smart" gadgets, time — or rather, enough of it—seems to be in short supply. Because we know your time is valuable, we are leveraging technology to save more of it for you.

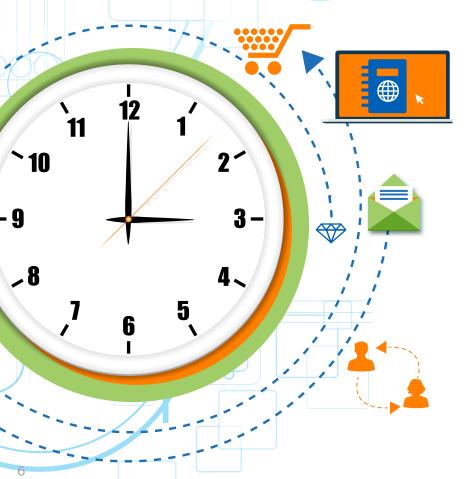
Online Payments

Don't wait in line in our offices. You can make payments online. We expanded our online payment system this past year. In addition to traffic tickets, individuals can now pay criminal fines and fees quickly and easily through our online payment portal.

Also, customers with multiple cases can get a total balance due in one easy location on our website. Anyone who needs payment options, can always visit any Clerk of Courts location during business hours Monday through Friday to request a Payment Plan Contract. You don't have to wait for a special event to get some help.

Juror Payments

Another new payment system recently began with the jurors who serve on court cases in Orange County. We are now using a convenient payment card system to compensate jurors who are not paid by their employer.





Jurors now receive a debit MasterCard they can use anywhere debit cards are accepted. The new payment cards save time as jurors no longer have to wait to get a check in the mail. At the end of their jury service, the card, which is much like a gift card, is uploaded quickly and easily with the funds they have earned.

Court Hearings

Anytime day or night, including weekends and holidays, upcoming court hearings can be found right from our website as well. Look for the title "Court Dates" on the top navigation bar. From that page, you can find an upcoming court date by entering a case number or a party name.

You can also search by date to see an entire listing of court hearings scheduled for an upcoming day. This search tool will provide a court date, time, and location for an upcoming hearing.

Online Appointments

The Clerk's Office launched an online feature that allows appointments to be scheduled in advance to get a new passport, marriage license, and wedding ceremony.

This new website feature allows customers to save time, plan ahead, and make arrangements for their day more easily.

Before a couple is required to come to our office to finalize their marriage license, they can fill out the application right from our website at their own convenience. Our eMarriage Application saves time, since the paperwork will be ready to go once couples appear in person to complete the application process.

Shopping Cart

We also took a hint from those popular eCommerce websites such as Amazon and recently launched a Shopping Cart of our own. The Clerk's Shopping Cart allows customers to purchase a packet or multiple packets of forms for Civil and Family matters online. Customers can also now order and pay online for copies of court records and documents, both certified and non-certified, from our Records Management Division

The packets are used in filing a new case or modifying an existing case in either the Family or Civil courts such as a Small Claims, Evictions or a Divorce case. After purchase, customers will receive an email that includes a link to download each of the packets they purchased.

All these online advances are available right at your fingertips at www.MyOrangeClerk.com



A Grand Opening for Self Help in Apopka

PROVIDING ACCESS TO JUSTICE

SELF HELP CENTERS PROMOTE A JOURNEY TO JUSTICE

One of our guiding principles is to focus on our community by serving and providing access. Our Self Help Centers in Orlando and Apopka were created to do just that. The Self Help Centers assist citizens of all income levels, no matter what background, with Small Claims, Residential Evictions, and Family Law Matters.

To showcase the services offered, we recently launched a video series called "My Journey to Justice", which features the stories of individuals who have visited the Self Help Center and were gracious enough to share their experience.

One customer, Jim, came to us for legal assistance in a child custody case. Another customer, Sandra, was able to get help with her family law cases. Our newest video highlights Yuwel, who came to the downtown location for help with her residential eviction case. You can watch these videos by going to our website at www.myorangeclerk.com.

Free Legal Forums

The Clerk's Office continues to provide free legal forums to help provide real, usable information to the public on legal topics. These forums are another one of Clerk Russell's priorities to provide education and access to justice to the community.

We have held these free forums on a wide variety of topics such as foreclosure, eviction, divorce, and public records. For the first time this past year, we held a forum on Child Support to provide details and answer questions about the process with representatives from the Clerk's Office, the Judiciary, and the Department of Revenue.

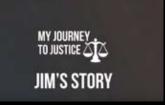
Helping to Restore Rights

The Clerk's Office has always had a hand in helping people who have completed the terms of their sentence get their voting rights restored. Each year, we partner with local elected officials, and justice partners to hold restoration of rights workshops where free copies of applicable documents are provided.

These workshops may no longer be necessary since voters passed Amendment 4, which makes the process of restoring voting rights easier. While there are still a lot of questions about the implementation of this new law, the Clerk's Office will assist as needed by providing any needed court documents as well as providing a status of payments submitted to the Clerk of Courts.







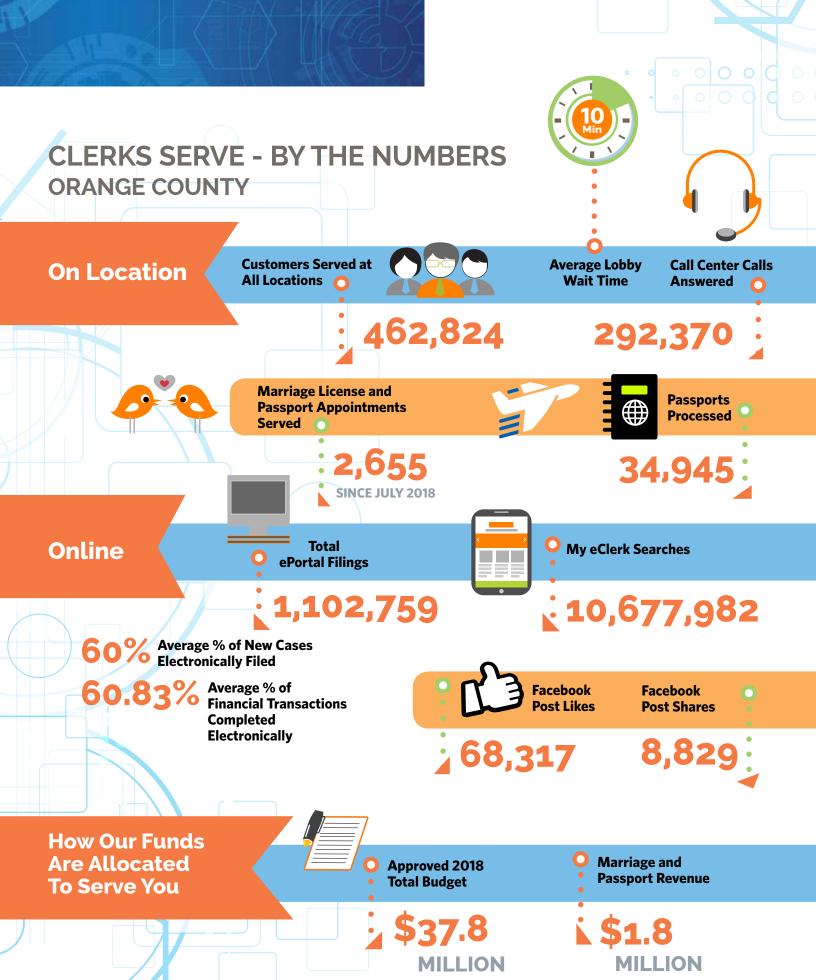


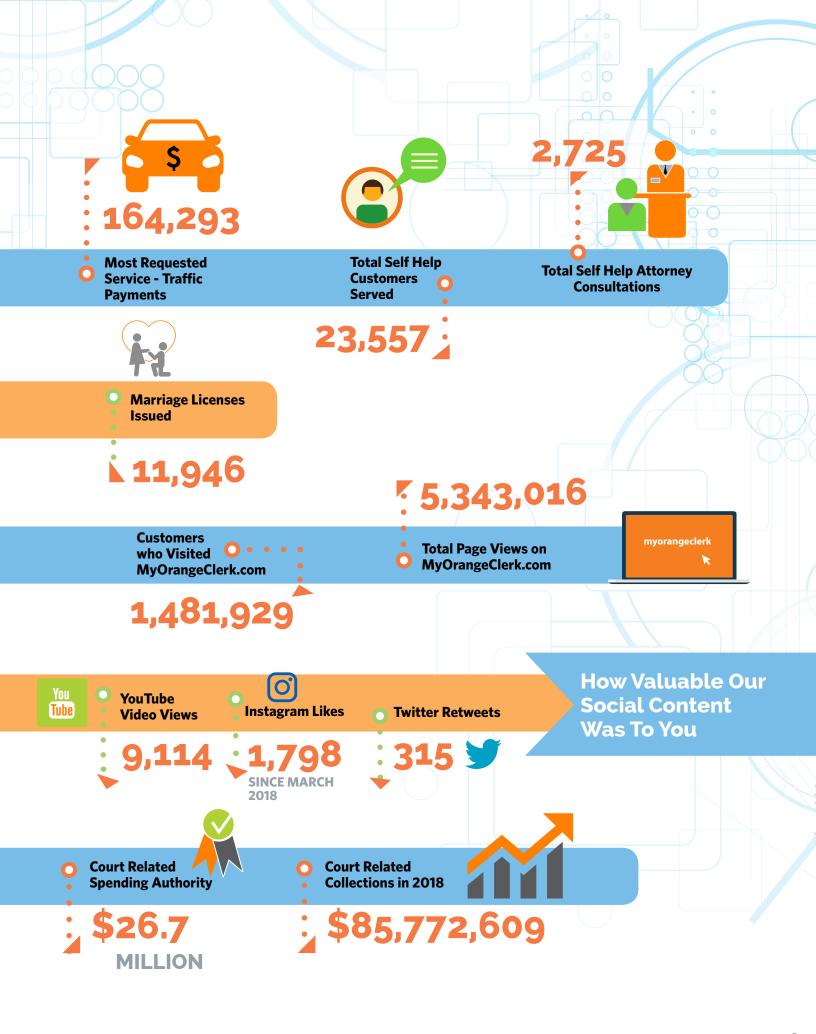


In the last year, the Clerk's Office expanded Self Help services to our Apopka branch and customers have been taking advantage of the center which is open one day a week. Over the last year since it was launched, 830 customers have been served with form completion, notary, and copy services. During that same time, a total of 577 customers received attorney consultations at the Apopka location.

The Self Help Centers are the first of their kind in Orange County to help people who don't have an attorney or can't afford one. The services provided are not based on income. Appointments can be made from the Self Help Center section of our website at www.myorangeclerk.com.







A DAY IN THE LIFE

You've seen our friendly faces at the front counters, spoken with helpful individuals on the phone, visited our website, and perhaps watched a few court dramas on TV. But do you know what our deputy clerks really do at the Clerk's Office? Here we provide a behind-the-scenes look at one of our most versatile positions, a Trial Clerk.

CLAIRE PALAFOX, Trial Clerk



Every trial clerk wears this signature black blazer. Claire says you'll always find pens tucked in the pocket, to take notes at a moment's notice.



Trial clerks must transpose all their notes into the computer to become part of the court minutes and official record.



These scanners and status cards are critical to establish if court is in session, recess, or adjourned.



Trial clerks use these tools to help calculate the appropriate dates in a sentence



Pens, pencils, highlighters, and staples are vital to their notetaking role. Claire emphasizes how important the white out is and how much regularly gets used!



than just swear people in and take evidence. Behind that computer, our hands and our minds are moving a mile a minute. It's somebody's life you're dealing with, so you have to get it right. I always thought trial clerks were a different breed of clerk. We are such multi-taskers, it's hard to pinpoint one specific task that we do. Our first priority is to keep the record. Each case gets handled - we jot down what happens in court. We accept evidence, we take pleas, we do fingerprints. We do everything that has to do with the case. We deal with not only coworkers at the Clerk's Office, but the Judges, Judicial Assistants, deputies, attorneys, defendants, State Attorneys, and Public Defenders. We wear so many hats all at one time, so it could be overwhelming for somebody looking from the outside in. But once you're in that seat in the courtroom and you learn it, it truly is a remarkable experience. You see a trial clerk who has been here for 20+ years. and when she's sitting there, she's listening, she's writing, she's computing, she's doing everything all at one time. And you have to do it with accuracy, in a minimal timeframe. It's incredible.

As a Trial Clerk, we do so much more





CIVIL DIVISION

What comes to your mind when you think of Civil legal matters? Below is just some of what our Civil Division might handle to serve our customers on any given day.



- Business Torts and Transactions
- Employment Discrimination
- Breach of Contract
- Trade Secrets
- Medical Malpractice
- Home Solicitation Permits



- Evictions
- Foreclosures



- · Small Claims
- · Auto Negligence
- · Insurance Claims



- Marriage Licenses
- · Wedding Ceremonies
- Passport Applications
- Mental Health Petitions
- Wills & Probate
- Guardianship



Deputy Clerks receiving certificates of commendation.

CLERKS SERVE

DEPUTY CLERK HEROES HONORED FOR SAVING CO-WORKER'S LIFE

At the Clerk's Office this past September, we had a real lifesaving emergency! Several quick thinking deputy clerks sprang into action when Stan Green went into cardiac arrest in our Civil division at the courthouse.

Deputy clerks Bridgette Harper, Sharon Bennette, Lashaunda Anderson, Grace Uy, and Matthew Domenech came to Stan's aid. Sharon and Lashaunda performed CPR on Stan while Brian Williams ran for a defibrillator, a device that delivers an electric shock to people whose hearts have stopped beating.

A customer who just happened to be a nurse and several deputies also assisted until the Orlando Fire Department paramedics got to the office. They were able to get Stan's heart beating again. We're so grateful Stan is doing better now and is back at work.

We recently held a ceremony to present these heroes with certificates of commendation to recognize them for their selfless acts and heroic efforts.

In My Feelings Video

When my team and I put together this fun #InMyFeelingsChallenge video, we never imagined we'd receive more than 12,500 views, 375 reactions, 90 comments and 180 shares on Facebook within a few days!

If you are not familiar with the trend, as part of the #InMyFeelingsChallenge, a video of dance moves is created to Drake's song, "In My Feelings". The video features our recently renovated marriage ceremony room at the downtown Orlando courthouse.







Valentine's Day - Love Is in the Air

As you may have seen on the local news, couples flocked to the newly remodeled ceremony room at our Marriage License and Passport office on the 3rd floor of the courthouse for Valentine's Day.

To make the day extra special, couples received a commemorative certificate, photos on a flash drive, and cupcakes for a \$50 fee as part of a special promotion.

In the end, our deputy clerks and Clerk Russell married 86 couples on just that one day at all of our locations.



34,945

41,622

Extending Hours to Better Serve Customers - Passport Events

The Clerk's Office is always working to be innovative to serve the community and make it easier for customers to do business with us. To that end, we have been opening a few extra days during busy times of the year, so that families busy with school and work have more options to use our services.

The Apopka, Ocoee, and Winter Park locations hosted Passport Saturdays on three separate Saturdays in the Spring and Fall. In the end, nearly 700 passport applications were processed during the extra Saturday hours. Keep watching our website for more Saturday extended hours in the future. For all of our latest news, sign up for our e-newsletter at the bottom of our website at www.myorangeclerk.com.

2018 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

CLERKS' OF COURT AND PUBLIC SAFETY

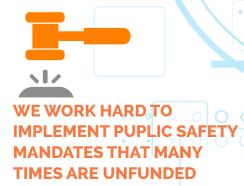
The Clerk of Courts is a justice partner in public safety. The office stays abreast of changes from the legislature and judiciary and works hard in implementing mandates – that many times are unfunded – in order to keep the public safe.

Risk Protection Orders

After the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in South Florida, the legislature created The Risk Protection Order Act. The statute seeks to reduce deaths and injuries by restricting persons who are at a high risk of harming themselves or others from having access to firearms or ammunition. A law enforcement officer or a law enforcement agency can file a petition for a Risk Protection Order (RPO). There is no filing fee for the RPO.

The Clerk is responsible for multiple complicated steps. A single misstep can result in a respondent not being served, lack of proper notification to appropriate agencies or the improper suspension of a concealed weapons permit.

The **Data Transparency Act** mandates that criminal data must be reported to FDLE on a monthly basis beginning January 1, 2019. Any entity who does not comply "is ineligible to receive funding" from the GAA or any grant program. It's estimated that the cost for us to derive the requested data is more than \$111,000 plus recurring costs.



Mental Health Reporting: Baker Act and Marchman Act

If someone poses a threat to themselves or others, a Baker Act and/ or Marchman Act can be filed at the Clerk of Courts by a mental health facility, or initiated by a law enforcement agency or counselor of a court. This is another case type that does not have a filing fee.

An error by the clerk can result in mentally unstable persons being allowed to purchase firearms or even be released from involuntary treatment accidentally.

Vulnerable Adult Injunctions: Injunction for Protection

After new legislative changes in 2018, injunctions for protection of vulnerable adults is another process that the clerks statewide began to perform.

Per Florida Statutes, a vulnerable adult is identified as someone with an impairment due to any of the following: disability (mental, emotional, sensory, long-term physical or developmental), brain damage, or infirmities of aging.

If someone is depriving the vulnerable adult of their funds or property, an injunction for protection can be filed at the Orange County Courthouse in our Civil Division.

Clerks tackle numerous statutes and processes that directly affect public safety. However, a lack of funding can jeopardize safety. While all of these new duties are important, no funding has been made available for Clerks to perform them.

Our office looks forward to working with the legislature during the legislative sessions to explore funding options to assist the clerks statewide in providing exceptional public service.



VULNERABLE ADULT INJUNCTIONS



BAKER ACT AND/ OR MARCHMAN ACT



MANAGING OUR MONEY

How the Clerk's Office manages its money is important, since we provide critical services that affect public safety, commerce, and access to justice. Contrary to popular belief, we are not taxpayer funded. Per the Florida Constitution, we actually operate by the fines and fees we collect.

This past year through efficiencies, attrition, conservative hiring practices, and technology we have been able to operate again within a limited budget. The Orange County Clerk's total court related budget for fiscal year 2018 was \$26.7 million dollars. While this amount was a small increase, our office has had a 31% reduction over the 10 years prior to this, but without disruption of services to our customers.

One of the main responsibilities of the Clerks Office is to collect fines and fees and distribute them to appropriate entities. By statute, we disburse millions of dollars collected each year to the state, agencies, programs and municipalities. In the end, we were only able to keep 31% of the money we collected this past year.

Florida's Clerks continue to partner with lawmakers to modernize the budget process and ensure Clerks can best serve Florida.

2018 | BY THE NUMBERS (ORANGE COUNTY CLERK - COURT ONLY)

TOTAL AMOUNT COLLECTED IN 2018:



PERCENTAGE/AMOUNT WE KEEP:



DISBURSEMENTS TO:

STATE AGENCIES:



ORANGE COUNTY:



LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES/AGENCIES:





We May Have Money for You to Claim

Did you know the Clerk's Office each year may have money for you that is just waiting to be claimed? Each year we publish an unclaimed checks list on our website to make sure that people who have money with our organization get what they rightly deserve.

The checks on the list were mailed, but for some reason never cashed. In some cases, the intended recipient moved away and did not leave a forwarding address. In other situations, some people may have forgotten about the check.

That is why every year we do all we can to spread the word about our unclaimed checks list. Whether you're an individual, business, or organization, make sure to view the unclaimed checks list published every year in July on our website.



PROTECTION FOR **DEMOCRACY PASSES**

THE PROTECTION AMENDMENT -**AMENDMENT 10**



The Clerk's Office as well as other constitutional offices watched Amendment 10 closely this past election. Amendment 10, also known as the Protection Amendment, passed after

receiving more than 60% of support from Florida voters in the November 2018 elections.

Amendment 10 protects Florida citizens and visitors by ensuring constitutional officers report directly to the people they serve. Besides ensuring constitutional officers are elected, Amendment 10 also creates the Office of Domestic Security and Counterterrorism within the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. This will provide essential support for law enforcement agencies to prevent or respond to acts of terrorism.

History on Constitutional Officers as Elected Officers

Not all constitutional officers are elected or held accountable to the people they serve; however, in Orange County they are. Most counties are fortunate to have elected constitutional officers. Amendment 10 returns the power to voters to determine who will serve as their Sheriff, Clerk of Court, Property Appraiser, Tax Collector, and Supervisor of Elections.

Why And How Amendment 10 "Came To Be"

All the amendments on the General Election November 6th ballot were proposed by the Florida Constitution Revision Commission, citizen initiatives or the Florida Legislature. Amendment 10 was proposed by the Florida Constitution Revision Commission that meets every 20 years.

How Partnerships Collaborated For Voter Outreach

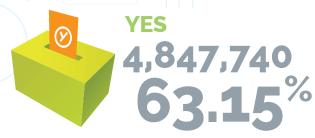
As a government agency, constitutional officers can educate voters about what is on the ballot. By holding press conferences, handing out flyers at community events, and working with community partners, the C.O.R.E committee - Constitutional Officer Resource Experts - developed an effective strategy to reach voters and educate them so that they understand the role of constitutional officers and the multiple parts of the Amendment.

Composed of four of Florida's constitutionally-mandated offices including Sheriff, Clerk of Court, Tax Collector, and Property Appraiser, C.O.R.E. is a united body to promote the importance of the constitutional revision process and served as a resource on role-related matters.

Led by the Florida Sheriff's Association with the collaboration of the other constitutional officer associations, including the Florida Court Clerks and Comptrollers, these associations worked together to educate voters.

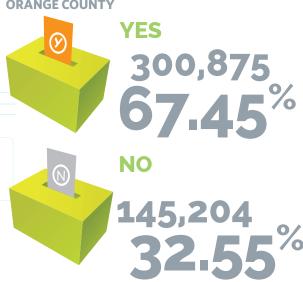
AMENDMENT 10 HOW VOTERS TURNED OUT

FLORIDA





ORANGE COUNTY





Clerks Care Homeless Clothing Drive

CLERKS CARE

The Clerk's Office is being strategic with what we call our Clerks Care community outreach initiatives. Our focus is access to justice, domestic violence, and mental health awareness.

For Mental Health Awareness month in May, 100 people came out to a free "My Health Matters: Health & Wellness Lunch & Learn" in the jury room of the Orange County Courthouse.

Mental health vendors and organizations were on hand to provide information and resources to the community. Partners joined us from the Mental Health Association of Central Florida, Centra Care, Cigna, Orlando Health, The Standard, Primary Care Action Network, and the YMCA.



For Domestic Violence Awareness month in October, we hosted a tailored "Clerks Against Domestic Violence" forum that led us to ioin forces with Harbor House of Central Florida, the Orlando Police Department, and the Mental Health Association of Central Florida.

Event topics included: how to file a restraining order with our office, guidance from Harbor House, on

creating a safety plan, a presentation on dealing with trauma, and to top off the forum, Orlando Police even conducted a self-defense class for enthusiastic participants.

Clerks CARE Clothing Drive

The Clerk's Office does care about the community and each year we select a service project in order to give back. For 2018, we partnered with the Central Florida Commission on Homelessness to coordinate a clothing and supply drive to benefit the homeless population in Orange County.

The clothing drive was so successful, deputy clerks collected 15 large boxes of clothing, toiletries, hygiene products, and

CLOTHING DRIVE

UNITED WAY

RAISED IN 2018

SENIOR HOLIDAY BRUNCH

other necessities. That's more than 1,500 pounds of items for those in need! Thank you to everyone who donated. You truly made a difference in the lives of



Orange County Seniors Enjoy This Year's Senior Holiday Brunch

For the past several years, the Clerk's Office has hosted an annual Senior Holiday Brunch. It is a fun-filled event with informative presentations, and of course, a holiday meal for 450 seniors. Seniors contribute so much to our community with their knowledge, wisdom, and experience. It is a joy for Clerk Russell to host this event with the help of more than 50 volunteers from the Clerk's Office, Orange County Corrections, and the community.

United Way Campaign Exceeds Expectations

The Clerk's 2018 Live United campaign not only surpassed its goal, but it was the highest amount raised in recent years. The big check of \$28,098.42 was presented to the Heart of Florida United Way. We couldn't have done it without all of the dedication by deputy clerks who pitched in by donating money, time, and hard work.

While there are dozens of organizations that receive support from United Way, our office's campaign focused on mental health, and domestic violence.



The Big Check presented to the Heart of Florida United Way

REPORT TO THE CITIZENS OF **ORANGE COUNTY**

Tiffany Moore Russell

Orange County Clerks of Courts 407.836.2000 www.myorangeclerk.com

#ConnectWithTheClerk











Orange County Courthouse 425 N. Orange Ave. Orlando, FL 32801

> Apopka Branch 1111 N. Rock Springs Rd. Apopka, FL 34712

Goldenrod Service Center 684 S. Goldenrod Rd. Pinar Plaza Orlando, FL 32822

> Ocoee Branch 475 Story Rd. Ocoee, FL 34761

Winter Park Branch 450 N. Lakemont Dr. Winter Park, FL 32792



This report is provided as a public service to the citizens of Orange County. For more information, please contact Dain Weister Director of Communications and Public Affairs at 407-836-2053 or dain.weister@myorangeclerk.com

