

Greetings!

Our **office consolidation project** is coming to an end. The latest moves involve Clerk's Accounting and Collections Enforcement. Both offices are now located in the East Corridor. Clerk's Accounting is now on the south side of the hall, while Collections Enforcement is on the north side. Our Human Resources office will be the final office to move. Its new location will be on the first floor, in the West Corridor by the County Café. Thank you for your patience during the project. We look forward to the improved accessibility and service this project will provide.

On another note, the Clerk's Call Center is now servicing all the calls for our Northeast Branch. If your office gives our Northeast Branch number, 863-401-2400, to customers or has it listed on any documents, please begin using our main number, 863-534-4000. Once fully established, our Call Center is expected to service 80 percent of customers' needs without having to transfer to another department. The Call Center will increase our efficiency and service quality.



- Stacy

Polk Records Online

We have developed a new system called Polk Records Online (PRO), which will allow the public to view court documents electronically as mandated in Fla. Admin. Order No. AOCs 15-18 (June 9, 2015).

Our new system received official approval by the Florida Courts Technology Commission in August, and we have started our 90-day pilot of the system, which we expect to complete by the end of the year.

The new system will replace the current systems attorneys use to search Polk case records. Several improvements and changes will occur once the PRO system is implemented.

Improvements

The user experience will be friendlier and the system will be easier to navigate. Users will be able to search all courts through a single search, and all cases will display information identically. Additionally, user management functions will improve with the availability of automated password resets and easy-to-remember usernames. The new system will work on most devices and browsers, and attorneys will be able to manage their own users. Another bonus is that documents will be displayed using PDF, which will eliminate the Java issues many of you have encountered.

Changes

Several changes will also occur as the new system is implemented. The Supreme Court Administrative Order (AOSC15-18), includes a complex security matrix that defines 13 different types of user roles and associated access permissions to online records. The matrix is designed to balance reasonable viewing access for the public and an individual's right to privacy.

These new access standards apply to all users including court staff, agency partners, attorneys, media and the general public. Access levels are determined by the user's role and applicable statutes, rules and administrative policy.

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Property Alert Service

Polk County property owners can now monitor their property records with our new **Property Alert Service**. The **FREE** service emails registered users by email each time an official record (e.g. deed, mortgage, lien, court judgement, etc...) is recorded with their name and/or parcel id number.

Users can register their name, family members' names, as well as business names. While the service cannot prevent fraud, it helps identify possible fraud at an early stage.



If there is reason to suspect a document was fraudulently recorded, customers can contact law enforcement and/or seek advice from an attorney.

The service was developed in response to the nationwide increase in property fraud crimes. Sign up for Property Alert at www.polkcountyclerk.net.

Parking Garage Update

Plans are progressing along for the parking garage in downtown Bartow by the courthouse. The final plans should be submitted this month to the Board of County Commissioners. Pending the Board's approval, construction is expected to begin in October and be completed by next summer. The garage will be four-stories high and hold close to 700 parking spaces. There will be a fee to park in the garage. The fee has not been determined. Surface parking in the area will be free.



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PolkCountyClerk

Polk Records Online Continued . . .

Viewing may be restricted to certain user groups based on case type, document type or information contained within records.

Of particular note for the legal community is that case access will change for attorneys who are not of record on a particular case. Once registered, these attorneys will be able to view non-confidential images. However, under the new order, some record types with elevated security requirements will require the Clerk's office to review the records to ensure the appropriate information has been protected before the file can be viewed online. We expect this "View on Request (VOR)" process to take less than 48 hours.

Along with this, attorneys of record will be removed upon the termination of a proceeding following the expiration of any applicable time for appeal, where no appeal is taken (Rule of Judicial Administration 2.505).

The general public will not be required to register for credentials in order to view available documents remotely.

This user role is called "anonymous" in the security matrix. The matrix requires the VOR process on most documents before they can be viewed by an anonymous user. In addition, Family and Probate documents cannot be viewed by these users, only the progress docket.

All other users requiring a higher level of viewing access will be required to register for credentials, even if you're already registered with our current systems. Registered users will have additional access to view Family and Probate documents after they have gone through the VOR process. These users will not gain access to confidential documents.

I will continue to provide updates as we progress through our pilot. Our existing systems will remain in place until the new system has been tested and implemented.

Please keep an eye on your email and our website for additional updates.

Emergency Filings in the E-Filing Portal

There is an 'Emergency' option available in the portal for time sensitive filings.

The Clerk is notified when this option is selected and can take appropriate action. For instance, if a Written Plea of Not Guilty is E-Filed within 2 to 3 days of the Arraignment Hearing, please select 'Emergency' to notify the Clerk that the filing is time sensitive.

Driver's License Suspension Changes

The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles mandates Clerks of Court to send an electronic notification for suspending a Florida driver's license when individuals fail to pay their financial fines for criminal offenses.

The Clerk's office is close to finishing the programming needed to implement this process. Once implemented, licenses will be suspended for individuals who fail to pay their criminal fines. Previously, licenses were only suspended for individuals with traffic infractions.

E-Filing Portal Update Sept. 18

MyFICourtAccess.com is unavailable from 9 p.m., Friday, Sept. 18 to 6 a.m., Saturday, Sept. 19 for maintenance. It is recommended to not file documents during this scheduled maintenance. A number of new upgrades will be installed at this time.

Some of these upgrades include:

- The ability to remove yourself from the service list, even if you were added by another party
- The ability to save cases and resume work on them at a later time

Additional details are available at <http://bit.ly/1KJkc3t>. For assistance, contact support@myflicourtaccess.com.



Florida Courts E-Filing Portal
GOVERNED BY THE FLORIDA COURTS E-FILING AUTHORITY

- Navigation -

Get the latest NEWS about Florida's E-Filing Portal

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Contact Us

E-Filing Workshop

Wednesday, Oct. 21
9 a.m.

Polk County Courthouse
2nd Floor - Jury Assembly Room
255 N. Broadway Ave. Bartow, FL

RSVP at www.surveymonkey.com/r/OctEFiling