



Crystal K. Kinzel

Collier County Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller
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Dear Citizens:

If you have watched the news anytime during the past few months, you probably know that the subject of guardianship is very topical in the United States. The high-profile Brittany Spears case involving the court ordered conservatorship has put a spotlight on all phases of the guardianship process and the level of protection for those living under a court-imposed guardianship. As a reminder, the Clerk’s Office helps to protect wards from exploitation and abuse by auditing guardianship plans, inventories, and accounting reports. Our goal is to protect the assets of the ward and hold the guardian accountable to the court. In addition, we review the reports filed by guardians for errors and irregularities and advise the Court of audit results.



Last year I served on a statewide multi-agency task force that was charged with comprehensively reviewing Florida’s guardianship process. Fellow members and I have developed a list of recommendations that we think will improve the system and provide better protection for wards. Those recommendations have been provided to legislators (House Bill 1349 and Senate Bill 1710) for their consideration during the 2022 legislative session. There have already been a couple of amendments to the proposed legislation, I’ll keep you posted on the progress of the bills.

Our focus as always is on you, our customers. I’m happy let you know that we are nearing the completion of several big customer service improvement projects. Our newest neighborhood satellite office, Heritage Bay, which is located at the intersection of Collier Blvd and Immokalee Road, will “softly” open to the public in early February, with a grand opening scheduled for later in the month. Our first customer service interactive prototype kiosk has been built and will be placed in the Heritage Bay Office for testing. Customers who choose, can use the kiosk to avoid lines and transact business through the kiosk. Customers will soon be able to communicate remotely with deputy clerks in real time, scan and print documents, pay fees, and more.

Additional projects moving forward:

- Our website redesign project will soon be complete. The new website will be more organized and navigable so users can easily find and utilize our many online services. But rest assured, we are keeping some of the features that you, our customers, like so much, including the popular “easy buttons.”
- Upgrade of our jury system to better serve jurors and the courts.
- Streamlining of the Notice of Commencement process.
- E-certify implementation so that more can be done remotely.

We are also busy making final plans for our Valentine’s Day Group Wedding and Vow Renewal Ceremony. If you haven’t registered, there still may be time. Hurry and call Community Relations Director, Mike Sheffield, at (239) 252-6879. Look for event photos in our March newsletter and on our website at CollierClerk.com.

In closing, I would like to express my best wishes to my counterpart in Lee County, Clerk Linda Doggett. After nearly four decades of public service to Lee County, Linda is retiring, effective Feb. 18. Enjoy your retirement, Linda!

Collier Clerk Newsletter February 2022

Office Locations

Main Office

Courthouse
3315 Tamiami Trail E.
Naples, FL 34112
(239) 252-2646

Satellite Offices

Airport Motor Vehicle
725 Airport Road South
Naples, FL 34104

Eagle Creek
6654 Collier Boulevard
Naples FL 34114

Everglades City Hall
102 Copeland Ave. N.
Everglades City, FL 34139

Golden Gate Gov. Center
4715 Golden Gate Parkway
Naples, FL 34116

Immokalee
106 South First Street
Immokalee, FL 34142

North Collier Gov. Ctr.
2335 Orange Blossom Drive
Naples, FL 34109

Customer Service
(239) 252-2646

www.CollierClerk.com



www.facebook.com/CollierClerk

Scammers are Targeting Americans with *Billions of Robocalls*

People lose a lot of money to phone scams - sometimes their life savings. Advanced automatic dialing systems have enabled cyber criminals to reach a significant number of people at the same time with *robocalls*. A robocall is an automated phone call that is made by a computer system. These calls are mass delivered to phones and automatically play a message whenever the person on the other end answers.



Here is what you need to know:

- Don't answer calls from numbers you don't recognize.
- If you answer the phone and hear a recorded message or just silence, it's a robocall. ***Hang up!*** Don't worry about being polite.
- Don't press a number - it could lead to more robocalls.
- Don't rely on your caller ID. Scammers often fake the name and number that shows up, making it look like the call is from a government agency, charity, bank, or someone you know. That is called spoofing. Scammers often use "spoofed" names and numbers to carry out imposter scams. They try to convince you to wire money or pay them with gift cards. Anyone who asks you to pay that way is a scammer. **There is never a good reason to send cash, wire money, or pay with a gift card.**
- It is never a good idea to give out sensitive information like your Social Security number to someone who calls you unexpectedly, even if they say they're with the Social Security Administration or IRS. **Government agencies are not calling to confirm your sensitive information.**
- **Don't fall for the One-Ring Scam.** Scammers are hoping you will call back. If you call back, chances are you are calling overseas and you will be charged exorbitant rates for the time on the call. Calling back could also lead to more robocalls.
- Many cell phones come with options that let you block calls from specific numbers. Call blocking can help stop most robocalls, but some robocalls might still get through. Learn more by contacting your cell service provider.
- Consider downloading a call-blocking app. A call-blocking app acts like a filter. The company behind the app uses call data or reports from users to predict which calls are illegal or likely scams. The app then intercepts those calls before they reach you. Some apps are free, but others must be purchased. View a list of call blocking apps at [CTIA - How to Stop Robocalls](#)
- Register for the **National Do Not Call Registry**. If you are on the National Do Not Call Registry, you should not get live sales calls from companies you have not done business with before. However, the Registry only stops calls from real companies. The Registry can not stop calls from scammers who ignore the Registry. You can register both your home and cell numbers. Registrations do not expire, and the government is not releasing phone numbers to telemarketers.

Stop unwanted calls and report robocalls:

Visit the website of the Federal Trade Commission - Consumer Information Division:
www.Consumer.ftc.gov - [How to Stop Unwanted Calls | FTC Consumer Information](#)

Register your home phone and/or cell phone number with the **Do Not Call Registry** - www.donotcall.gov/

File a complaint at <https://consumercomplaints.fcc.gov/> or by calling 1-888-225-5322.

Learn More About Small Claims Court

What is a small claims case?

Small Claims Court is a way to settle legal disputes in which the amount of damages or value of the property involved does not exceed \$8,000. These cases are heard by a judge and usually there is not a jury trial.

What types of cases are filed in small claims court?

Often times, people and businesses file a small claims case because of an agreement that was not satisfied. For example, if a photographer is hired for \$1,000 to take five-hundred pictures at a wedding then fails to do so, then the bride and groom may file a small claims suit against the photographer.

What form is filed to start a small claims case?

The plaintiff or the person filing the new case must complete a complaint form called a Statement of Claim providing details to the Court about why the case is being filed. Copies of agreements, invoices, billing statements, letters, or other documents are often attached as evidence or proof. A Summons form must also be completed then given to either the Sheriff's Office or a process server with the Statement of Claim and attachments to deliver to the person being sued.

Where can I find the forms and file a small claims case?

The Statement of Claim form can be found at www.collierclerk.com, or may be completed on a computer at the Collier Clerk's Self-Help Center, located on the third floor of the Courthouse Annex Building, 3315 Tamiami Trail E., Naples, Florida 34112. Small Claims cases are filed with the Clerk of Courts office. Filing fees apply - [Fees \(collierclerk.com\)](http://www.collierclerk.com)

Is there a hearing or a trial in Small Claims Court?

After the defendant (the person being sued) receives the summons and statement of claim, both the plaintiff and the defendant must appear in Court for a Pretrial Conference. At a Pretrial Conference, a mediator helps both sides agree to a settlement. However, if the matter cannot be resolved at the Pretrial Conference, then a trial is scheduled so a County Court Judge may rule on the case. At the trial, the plaintiff and defendant may call witnesses, present evidence and arguments about the case to the judge.

For more information about Small Claims Court, visit [Small Claims \(collierclerk.com\)](http://www.collierclerk.com) or call (239) 252-2646.



Pay \$89 for a Copy of your Deed? It's a Racket! Don't Fall For It!

Many new homeowners in Collier County have informed the Clerk's office that they have received a letter in the mail that appears to be from a government office; however, it is not. The deceitful letter is actually a solicitation sent from a private company attempting to convince unsuspecting homeowners to pay \$89 for a copy of their deed. Don't fall for it!



**Don't be Fooled by
Deceitful Mail that
Looks Official**

Residents can view and print copies of deeds and other property records **for free**, on the Clerk's website: Collier-Clerk.com.

Certified copies may be purchased for \$1 per page/\$2 per instrument.

For more information about property deeds and other official records, call the Recording Division at (239) 252-7242.

Time is Running Out -

*Are you registered for the
Wedding and Vow Renewal Group Ceremony?*

Registration will soon close for the Collier County Clerk of Court's Wedding and Vow Renewal Group Ceremony, to be held on the most romantic day of the year - Valentine's Day, Monday, February 14, 2022.

Engaged couples with a valid marriage license are invited to unite in marriage during a single group ceremony. Married couples who wish to celebrate their years together are invited to renew their vows during a single group ceremony. The officiant for both group ceremonies will be Clerk Crystal K. Kinzel.

The Wedding and Vow Renewal Group Ceremony will be held at 11 a.m., Monday, February 14, 2022 at the Collier County Museum, 3331 Tamiami Trail E., Naples, Florida 34112. The museum was chosen as the venue because of its picturesque outdoor gardens and proximity to the courthouse.

All couples must pre-register by calling (239) 252-6879.

For more information about marriage license applications, call (239) 252-7242.

Making Plans to Travel Abroad Over Spring Break? Summer Vacation? A Cruise?

Hurry and Apply for your U.S. Passport



The Office of the Collier County Clerk is the only agency in the county that has been designated by the U.S. Department of State as an acceptance facility for passport applications. In this capacity, deputy clerks provide services to first time applicants and to those who have an expired passport that was issued more than 15 years ago.

According to the [State Department](#), routine passport applications are being processed in 8 to 11 weeks; 5 to 7 weeks for those who opt for expedited processing. To successfully apply for a passport, all applicants must bring the following with them to Clerk's Office:

Evidence of United States Citizenship, such as:

- U.S. birth certificate with official seal
- Prior U.S. passport
- Certificate of naturalization (if applicable)

Photo Identification, such as:

- Valid driver's license
- Prior passport
- Government employee identification (city, county, state, or federal) or U.S. military identification

Passport Photo (commonly obtained at Walgreens, CVS, AAA offices, and travel agencies)

- Recent color photo (white background, eyeglasses removed)
- Must be 2 inches by 2 inches in size

Two Separate Forms of Payment - Separate fees are paid to the Clerk's office and the Dept. of State. Visit our website to learn more about fees - [Passports \(collierclerk.com\)](#)

Those wishing to renew a current passport, or an expired passport that was issued within the last 15 years, should do so online. Go to www.travel.state.gov and follow the instructions.

Visit us at one of our locations listed below (9 a.m. - 4 p.m., weekdays)

Collier Courthouse 3315 Tamiami Trail East Naples, FL 34112	Eagle Creek (south Collier) 6654 Collier Boulevard Naples, FL 34114	Golden Gate Gov. Center 4715 Golden Gate Pkwy Naples, FL 34116	North Collier Gov. Ctr. 2335 Orange Blossom Dr Naples, FL 34109	Immokalee 106 South First Street Immokalee, FL 34142	Everglades City Hall 102 Copeland Ave. N. Everglades City, FL 34139
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Attention Collier Residents - Surge in Jury Duty Scam Occurring Across the State

Don't fall victim to the jury duty scam!

The Jury Duty scam typically involves an imposter contacting a Florida resident and claiming the resident missed jury duty and must pay a fine. The imposter states that a warrant will be issued for your arrest because you have failed to show for jury duty. The only way to avoid arrest and incarceration is to immediately pay a fine by credit card, prepaid debit cards/gift cards, or money transfer.

If you protest that you never received a jury summons, the scammer asks for your Social Security number and date of birth, claiming to need it to cancel the arrest warrant. However, the personal information that you divulge may be used to commit additional fraud.

Remember: Neither law enforcement nor court agencies will ever contact you by telephone or email about missed jury duty or call you to collect payment of a fine by any method including credit card or prepaid debit cards/gift cards. This scam can take other forms, including impersonating the IRS, your bank, utilities, and many other legitimate organizations. Remember, anyone asking for payments to be made through a gift card is a scammer.

The Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court is responsible for processing jurors including qualifications, summonses, selection lists and reporting. A jury duty summons will only be delivered by U.S. mail.

Report suspected jury duty scams to the Collier County Clerk's office, 252-6879 and the Collier Sheriff's Office, 252-9300.

To learn more about jury service in Collier County, go to www.CollierClerk.com and click on the **Jury button**.

Question for the Clerk’s Office: What is a “Declaration of Domicile?”

I purchased a condo in Collier County and now I’m considering becoming a Florida resident. I hear people talk about “Declaration of Domicile,” but I don’t know what that means. What is a “Declaration of Domicile?”

Answer:

In Florida, a Declaration of Domicile is a person’s sworn declaration publicly attesting that he/she intends to maintain a permanent home in Florida, within the county where recorded by the clerk’s office. Each year, hundreds of Domicile Declarations are submitted to the Collier County Clerk’s office for recording in the county’s Official Record.

A "domicile" is a person’s permanent principal residence. The state where a person is domiciled is important for many reasons, including eligibility for programs and tax benefits. The clerk’s office is merely the recorder of the document, and makes no determination as to residency.

Filing a Declaration of Domicile does not automatically make a person a resident of Florida, in fact, it is not even a requirement. It is one method to help support a person’s residency claim. Other common steps taken to help support a claim include acquisition of a Florida driver's license, registration of automobiles, voter registration, and submission of an application for Homestead Property Tax Exemption.

To obtain a blank form, or to submit a completed form, visit our office at the courthouse or any satellite location. Blank forms can also be found at www.CollierClerk.com (click the “Forms” button). In order to be recorded, the document must be signed in front of a notary public or a deputy clerk.

The cost to record a one-page declaration is \$10 and \$3.50 for signature acknowledgment by a deputy clerk. For more information about establishing residency, review Florida Statute §222.17 and contact an attorney. For more information about recording a Declaration of Domicile, call the Clerk’s Recording Division at (239) 252-7242.

Upcoming Meetings of the Collier County Board of County Commissioners:

- **Tuesday, February 8**
- **Tuesday, February 22**

Here’s a partial list of *potential* items that *may* appear on the Board’s agenda on February 8, 2022

- Direction from the Board of County Commissioners (acting at the Community Redevelopment Agency Board) on the future development of the 17 +/- acre site located in the Bayshore Gateway Triangle Community Redevelopment Area.
- Staff recommendation to approve and execute an Interlocal Agreement between Collier County and the City of Naples concerning Landscape Maintenance for certain county medians within or adjacent to city limits.
- Staff recommendation to approve funding not to exceed \$151,650 for half of the cost to complete the Marco Island Historical Museum lobby with furnishings and feature exhibits.

Access meeting agendas at www.CollierCountyFl.gov or by navigating directly to the [Meeting Portal - Collier County, FL](#).



Regular meetings begin at 9 a.m. and are held at the following location:

**County Commission Chamber
Collier County Government Center
3299 Tamiami Trail East, 3rd floor
Naples, FL 34112**

Process for Speaking at Regular Commission Meetings

Speaker slips are located in the hallway. The completed slip must be turned in before the agenda item begins.

To Comment on a Regular Agenda Item:

To comment on an item that is on the *Regular Agenda*, register to speak for that specific item, for example, *11a—Landscaping of Medians*.

To Comment on a Consent Agenda Item:

To comment on an item on the *Consent Agenda*, register to speak for item *2A, Approval of Today’s Regular, Consent and Summary Agenda*. Items on the consent agenda are approved by the board in one action at the start of the meeting without discussion.

To Comment on a General Topic not on the Current Agenda:

To comment on a general topic that is not on the current or upcoming agenda, register to speak for item *7, Public Comments on General Topics*.

We Want You on Our Team!

At the Office of the Collier County Clerk, we proudly carryout our mission -

"To safeguard public funds and provide high-quality essential services to the citizens and taxpayers of Collier County."

We have Immediate Openings Available in a Variety of Fields!

(Full-time employment, volunteer positions, and internships)

Courts
Customer Service
Recording

Finance/Accounting
Operations
Information Technology

Administration
Community Relations
Inspector General

Full-time employment benefits include:

- Medical insurance coverage starts on the first day on the job
- Paid vacation days, personal days and holidays
- Membership in the Florida Retirement System

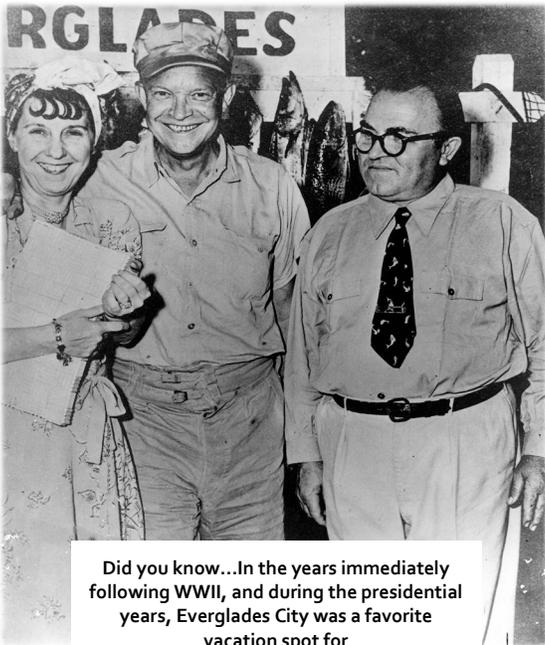
*Join
our team!*

*No requirement
for
COVID
vaccination*

Apply at www.CollierClerk.com



President's Day February 21



Did you know...In the years immediately following WWII, and during the presidential years, Everglades City was a favorite vacation spot for Dwight & Mamie Eisenhower.

Photo courtesy of the Collier County Museum

We Had a Busy Year at the Collier Clerk's Office!

Check-Out these Numbers!

- 779,000 Pages Recorded in the County's Official Records
- 10,000 Passport Applications Processed
- 3,050 Marriage Licenses Issued
- 745 Marriage Ceremonies Performed
- 334,800 Court e-Filings Processed & Over 3 million Images Created
- 12,150 Juror Summonses Issued
- 42 Investigative Activities Opened in our Inspector General Office
- 134,000 County Vendor Invoices Processed & Paid Totaling \$1.2 Billion

For more information about newsletter content or about the Clerk's operations:



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