

Crystal K. Kinzel

Collier County Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller
3315 Tamiami Trail East, Suite 102
Naples, Florida 34112-5324
www.CollierClerk.com



Dear Citizens,

July brings hot summer days and warm summer nights, but it also brings together family and friends to celebrate America the beautiful. As we commemorate the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, I hope you will join me on July 2nd at 10:00 a.m. in Everglades City. The city will host a parade, events throughout the day and fireworks. The celebration will be held at McLeod Park. If you miss the parade on the 2nd then join us at the City of Naples Independence Day Parade on July 4th at 10:00 a.m. and don't forget to also enjoy the amazing Fireworks at 9:00 p.m. near Naples Pier. To learn more, please visit www.Naplesgov.com or visit www.visitevergladescity.com.

Florida's Freedom Week Sales Tax Holiday begins on Friday July 1 and extends through Thursday, July 7. Consumers can purchase qualifying recreation and outdoor items and admissions to entertainment and cultural events. These purchases are exempt from taxes during this period. This is a great opportunity to help you save as you prepare for hurricane season and gear up for summer fun. To learn more, please visit www.floridarevenue.com.

Another important date in history to remember is July 30, 1778. On this day Congress passed our nation's first whistleblower law and on July 30, 2013, the U.S. Senate enacted their joint resolution recognizing National Whistleblower Appreciation Day. My office has established a confidential hotline to detect fraud, theft and abuse of county dollars. As your elected steward for Collier County, I am a fierce advocate to support and protect whistleblowers and your tax dollars. If you suspect fraud, theft or abuse, please call our confidential 24/7 hotline at 844-ClerkIG (844-253-7544) or visit our homepage www.CollierClerk.com and click on the reporting fraud button.

Summer months are a great time to get outdoors and enjoy good times in the sun, but safety is most important. A few tips to consider when having fun in the sun are using a buddy system when swimming in open water or in a pool. If you plan to head to the beach, know before you go, please visit www.visitbeaches.org.

Crystal K. Kinzel

Collier Clerk Newsletter



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

Heritage Bay
15450 Collier Blvd.
Naples, FL 34120

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/Collier Clerk](https://www.facebook.com/CollierClerk)



Exciting News! You are now able to record documents for filing official land records, Notice of Commencement, Mortgages, Deeds and Satisfactions at Growth Management located at 2800 Horseshoe Drive, N.

Collier Clerk's Office Seeks Rightful Owners of Unclaimed Money

Did you forget to cash a check carefully filed away in a desk drawer? Everyone likes to find forgotten money. Did you know that you might also find money that belongs to you at the Collier Clerk's Office? Just look for your name on our lists of outstanding checks, and if it's there, hurry and claim your money.

Collier Clerk Crystal Kinzel wants to remind you that the two lists of uncashed checks, those issued by the Clerk's Office and the other by the Board of County Commissioners, are updated monthly and available for viewing on the Clerk's website, CollierClerk.com - Unclaimed Monies. As of June 30, the combined total was over \$8.9 million in outstanding checks payable to individuals and businesses for reasons that include jury duty compensation, overpaid court fees and vendor payments. The checks, in various amounts ranging from 1 cent to over \$1 million, were either received but never cashed by the recipient, or were returned by the post office because the addressee moved without providing a forwarding address.

"This money belongs to our citizens, and we want them to have what is rightfully theirs," said Clerk

Crystal Kinzel. "Whether you are an individual or business, please make sure to look for your name on the unclaimed checks lists and help us by spreading the word to others. We would hate to see this money go unclaimed."

If your name appears and you believe that you have a valid claim to funds, follow the directions to complete the appropriate affidavit. Claimants must sufficiently prove ownership which includes providing a valid government issued photo identification and a notarized affidavit.



The lists of unclaimed funds, instructions, blank affidavit forms, and a link to unclaimed funds held by the State of Florida (www.fltreasurehunt.gov) can be found on the Clerk's website, www.CollierClerk.com Unclaimed Monies.

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CLAIM YOUR MONEY!

The next meeting of the Collier County Board of County Commissioners will be held @ 9 a.m. on July 12, 2022

Provided are a few items that may appear on the next Board's agenda:

- Recommendation to approve the award Invitation to Bid ("ITB") No. 22-7976, Vanderbilt Beach Road Extension Project to Sacyr Construction USA, LLC., in the amount of \$153,308,291.00 and authorize the Chair to execute the Agreement and approve all necessary budget amendments.
- Sale and purchase of additional Hussey property for the Conversation Collier Land Acquisition Program at a cost not to exceed \$2,090,000.
- Large construction projects including Randall Boulevard & Vanderbilt Beach Road Extension.
- Change orders for Big Corkscrew Island Regional Park and the Sports Complex.
- Gas tax renewals.



The Board of County Commissioners may typically suspend meetings over the summer, returning the second Tuesday in September on the 13th of the month. Regular meetings of the Board of County Commissioners are held at 3299 Tamiami Trail East, 3rd floor, Naples, Florida 34112. The public can access current meeting agendas and watch meetings at www.CollierCountyFl.gov. Prior agendas, meeting minutes and other board records can be found at www.CollierClerk.com.

Providing Customer Excellence is our Top Priority

Keeping up with the latest technology, legislative mandates and updates while following best practices are crucial in today's environment. The Clerk's office continues to take advantage of a variety of training methods including remote learning, in-house training and in-person training to keep staff up to date and at the top of their game. Providing continuous training and development ensures employees are providing the best in class customer experience each day. Staff recently trained on topics which included, Investments and Investment Strategies, Data Analytics, GASB 87 Implementation, Financial Reporting and Cybersecurity.

"Learning is a lifelong process and our continued efforts to provide training and development is imperative to ensure we provide the highest level of service to the citizens of Collier County." said Clerk Kinzel.



Community Outreach

Clerk Kinzel presented to members of the Collier Building Industry Association and educated the audience on all of the services the Clerk's agency provides. Thank you to the Collier Building Industry Association for the opportunity!

Celebrating Success at the Collier County Clerk's Office!

At the Florida Court Clerks & Comptrollers Summer Conference held in June, Clerk Crystal Kinzel was presented with a *Best Practices Certificate of Excellence* in the following categories:

- * Bail Bonds
- * Eviction
- * Evidence Storage and Destruction
- * Public Records Request
- * Confidential Judicial Records
- * Exploitation of Vulnerable Adult Injunction
- * Marriage License
- * Recording Fundamentals
- * Service of Documents by Clerks for Pro Se Litigants



**Heritage Bay
Government Services Center
15450 Collier Boulevard
Naples, Florida 34120**

*Near the intersection of Immokalee Road & Collier
Boulevard
Just north of NCH Northeast*

Collier County's newest government services satellite office is now open to the public, giving residents living in the northeastern portion of the county easier access to many important government services.

Agencies Housed at the New Heritage Bay Facility:

- Clerk of Court
- Tax Collector
- Property Appraiser
- Supervisor of Elections

Stay tuned for our official ribbon cutting ceremony and future events!



Florida's "Red Flag Law" and Risk Protection Orders

Mass shootings have taken over national headlines, prompting cries for gun safety legislation and leaving an indelible mark on our Country and The Sunshine State.

In February 2017, a 17-year-old expelled student returned to his former school with his legally purchased AR-15 rifle and committed what would become one of the deadliest High School shootings in American History. The incident in Parkland, Florida left 17 people dead and another 17 injured. One year later, The Florida Legislature responded by passing Florida Statutes sect. 790.401, more commonly known as ***The Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act or the "Red Flag Law"***. The design of the law is to "enhance public safety by restricting firearm and ammunition possession by a person who poses a danger to himself or herself or others."

How does a Risk Protection Order work? Who can file one? What does this mean for those who have their property seized?

- Only Law Enforcement may ask a court to enter a Risk Protection Order against someone that may be a danger to themselves or others. An individual can make a request; however, they would need to contact their local Police Department or Sheriff's Office. That individual would need to provide Law Enforcement with information regarding the person, including their current mental condition, any threats or acts of violence that were made and any other facts that raise a concern for safety. A description of the firearms and ammunition in question would need to be provided to help Law Enforcement thoroughly assess the situation.
- Once Law Enforcement has been notified of a potentially dangerous individual, they must investigate the claim to determine if they should petition the court for a Risk Protection Order.
- Should the Respondent meet the criteria for a Risk Protection Order, Law Enforcement will file a petition and affidavit with the Clerk of Courts, who in return will enter the case and the court will set a hearing that day for a Temporary Risk Protection Order. The temporary order will set a hearing for a Final Risk Protection Order within 14 days.
- If a Risk Protection Order has been granted, the Respondent must immediately surrender all his or her firearms, ammunition, and any license to carry a concealed weapon or firearm to the Law Enforcement officer who serves the order to the Respondent. Law Enforcement would then schedule a Compliance Hearing within three days, where the Respondent must show proof that they've surrendered all guns and ammunition.
- The Risk Protection Order will remain in place until the date written on the order. The maximum time for an order is one year, but it can be extended if the court sees fit.
- Once a protection order has been entered, the Respondent may make one written request for a hearing to vacate the order. During the hearing, they have the burden of proving, by clear and convincing evidence, that the order should be vacated based on reasons set out in the Florida Statutes.
- During the time the Risk Protection Order is in effect, the Respondent will be prohibited from purchasing, attempting to purchase, receiving, or possessing any firearm or ammunition for that specified period.
- Within 30 days prior to the expiration of the order, Law Enforcement may file a motion to extend the order and the court will hold a hearing to determine if the order should be extended. In the event the Risk Protection Order is extended, the Respondent would have another opportunity to submit a request to vacate the order.
- Should the Risk Protection Order be vacated or end without extension, Law Enforcement will return all seized guns and ammunition, after confirming through a background check that the Respondent is currently eligible to own or possess such materials.

Gun safety has become a prominent issue in the State of Florida and throughout the country. Since the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act became effective, Florida has issued 8,969 emergency risk protection orders including 72 cases in Collier County.



July 30th

National Whistleblower Appreciation Day

On July 30, 1778 America's first whistleblower law was passed during the height of the American Revolution, which affirmed:

“That it is the duty of all persons in the service of the United States, as well as all other inhabitants thereof, to give the earliest information to Congress or any other proper authority of any misconduct, frauds or misdemeanors committed by any persons in the service of these states, which may come to their knowledge.”

In recognition, the United States Senate recognized National Whistleblower Appreciation Day on July 30, 2013. This day celebrates the people who raise their voice in the name of combatting fraud, corruption, and other crimes. It commends the courage, strength of conviction, and dedication to the truth of whistleblowers.

The Inspector General, working with whistleblowers, recover billions of taxpayer dollars annually and help establish controls designed to prevent further waste, fraud, abuse, and/or corruption. In Florida, a whistleblower who reports gross mismanagement, malfeasance, misfeasance, gross waste of public funds, suspected or actual fraud or abuse, or gross neglect of duty is protected by Florida Statute §112.3187 (Whistleblower’s Act).

What is a whistleblower?

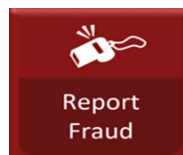
A whistleblower is someone who brings wrongdoing by an employer or by other employees to the attention of a government or law enforcement agency. A whistleblower typically (but not always) works inside of the organization where the wrongdoing is taking place.

Is there a confidential hotline to report suspected fraud or wrongdoing in Collier County?

The Collier County Clerk & Comptroller has established a confidential hotline that serves as an effective mechanism for preventing and detecting fraud, theft, or abuse of county dollars and resources carried out by any person, business, or organization that has a relationship with Collier County Government-Board of County Commissioners or the Collier County Clerk of Court to include:

•Contractors, Subcontractors, Vendors, Employees, Volunteers, Entities, Agencies, Organizations and Officials

Report suspected fraud or wrongdoing, 24-hours a day, 7 days a week, in English or Spanish. Call our confidential hotline at **844-ClerkIG (7544)** or call us locally at **239-252-8412**. Another option is to click on the “Reporting Fraud” button located on the homepage of www.CollierClerk.com.



Ask Clerk Kinzel a Question:



Question: Does your office audit not-for-profit organizations?

Answer: : The Clerk may audit or review Not-For-Profit (NFP) entities, as it relates to business with the Clerk or the Board of County Commissioners. For example, if a NFP applies for a County grant, the Clerk has broad powers to review documentation submitted and supporting books and records, to substantiate the request. Additionally, if a NFP is raising funds on behalf of a County program or a County property, or on a County property, the Clerk may also review the activities of the NFP. Any information which indicates potential criminal activity is referred to law enforcement by the Clerk's Office of Inspector General.

The public is encouraged to review the NFP's annual filings with the IRS (<https://www.irs.gov/charities-and-nonprofits>) and their registered status in Florida (<https://csapp.fdacs.gov/CSPublicApp/CheckACharity/CheckACharity.aspx>), to ensure that their dollars contributed are being spent as intended.

Question: Is there a notification option available to help you remember your court date?

Answer: E-Notify is a service that provides registered users with text and email reminders of upcoming criminal court dates. Similar systems are commonly used by doctors and dentists to send appointment reminders to patients by text and email.

The service was implemented statewide with the aim of lowering "failures-to-appear" rates for adult felony, adult misdemeanor, and criminal traffic court cases.

E-Notify is also a helpful resource for crime victims, parents, news reporters and anyone else who wants to stay informed about upcoming criminal court dates."



E-Notify was developed through a collaborative effort between the Florida State Courts System, the Florida Court Clerks & Comptrollers, the Clerks of Court Operations Corporation, and the Florida Legislature. E-Notify is a courtesy service only and registration is optional.

The system is not intended to be the official record or notice of a court event and it does not replace the current practice of mailing the Notice of Hearing to defendants.



**All government offices will be closed on Monday
July 4th, 2022
Happy Fourth of July!**

Join Clerk Kinzel on July 2nd @ 10:00 a.m. in Everglades City for the 4th of July parade and on July 4th @ 10:00 a.m. in Naples for the 4th of July parade. Let's celebrate!

We wish everyone a safe and happy 4th!

If you are interested in learning more about all of the services the Collier County Clerk and Comptroller's office provides. Please contact Lisa Kasparian, Director of Community Relations and Outreach at 239-252-6879.