



District Clerk Newsletter

Thomas A. Wilder, District Clerk



DISTRICT CLERK CORNER

Dear Legal Professionals,

District Clerk staff is stretched very thin these days due to high turnover and necessary training on complicated processes that clerks are mandated by law to do.

However, we are keeping our quick acceptance time well ahead of other counties. You will continue to get a live person when inquiring about court case filings even though we are exploring some AI capabilities.

Plans are being made to implement a new case management system for Civil, Family and Juvenile now that Criminal has been fully installed.

Funding and vendor selection will have to be done by Commissioners Court, but planning has begun. Stay tuned for further updates.

Finally, as are most of you, we continue to struggle with finding qualified personnel, getting them trained and hoping that our employee retention efforts bear fruit.

Let us know how we are doing at dclerk@tarrantcountytx.gov.

Regards,

District Clerk
DClerk@TarrantCounty.com

DCSA and other District Clerk systems will be down on Saturday, June 22, 2024 for maintenance.

Web Access
 Click below to sign up:
 Go to <https://dcsa.tarrantcounty.com>
 to apply today!



Inside this issue:

Section Spotlight / Case Style / Closures	2
TechShare / Protective Orders / Rule 21c	3
Section Spotlight / Case Style / E-filing Request	4
E-filing Report / Family Law Section Update	5
Closed Records	6
Contact Us / Civil Felony	7

Employee Spotlight

Brandye Kear, IV-D Court Leader



Brandye Kear's dedication to the Tarrant County District Clerk's Office is truly commendable. She initially joined as an Associate Court Clerk in the Civil Section in November 2016, gaining invaluable experience in the 96th, 153rd, 048th courts and the File Desk. After briefly pursuing a career in accounting at a private engineering firm in 2020, Brandye's passion for public service brought her back to the District Clerk's Office in January 2022 as an Associate Clerk in the Family Section's 231st court. Her exceptional performance led to promotions as the Lead Civil File Desk Clerk in February 2023 and her current position as the IV-D Court Leader in January 2024.

A native of Hurst, Texas, Brandye has been married to her husband, Jaime, for 11 years. They have three daughters, Emerson (16), Quinnlie (9), and Sullivan (4), and two beloved Great Pyrenees dogs, Remy and Kimber. When not at work, you might find Brandye at her daughter Quinnlie's cheer practice as an assistant coach, baking with her girls, or indulging in her self-proclaimed popcorn addiction at the movies. In her free time, Brandye loves immersing herself in true crime literature and media. With six years of dedicated service to the District Clerk's Office, Brandye's commitment to excellence is truly inspiring.

E-filing Proposed Orders

Please file proposed orders as an attachment to a lead document, whether that is a Motion or a Cover Letter. This way, the Proposed Order is not file-marked. This can lead to confusion when it conflicts with the date of the Judge's signature. It also leads to the Order having at least 2 file-marks once the signed Order is e-filed.



June 19, 2024

July 4, 2024

September 2, 2024

Juneteenth

Independence Day

Labor Day



TechShare Court – One year later

The District Clerk implemented TechShare Court on May 1, 2023. The goal was to retire multiple legacy applications spanning nearly 40 years and launch a centralized case management system that would unlock more capability to meet the ever-changing landscape of criminal justice. During implementation, our team navigated the challenges of learning a new case management system while ensuring the courts were able to maintain high volume dockets intended to resolve a backlog of cases brought about by Covid. Over the past year, our office in conjunction with TechShare, ITD, and various other county departments have validated software updates to gain more efficiencies in areas where court staff, attorneys, bondsmen and the public are impacted. Building upon the electronic case file process implemented by the District Clerk in February 2019, the team enhanced the electronic signature capability further reducing paper generation, improving document management, and expediting DCSA document access. TechShare Court has also unlocked additional capabilities for DCSA subscribers to view additional case information, docket/setting information and NISI balance and due date information to aid bondsmen in their daily operations. Our team is committed to identifying additional efficiencies in the months and years to come and appreciate the collaboration by all members of criminal justice over this transformational period.

Protective Orders Forms Changes and Reminders



Please note that the standardized forms for Protective Orders have changed. Instructions, applications and orders may be found at <https://www.txcourts.gov/rules-forms/standardized-protective-order-forms/>. In addition, be sure that when a protective order is handed to the clerks, that the additional paperwork needed for law enforcement is included. The Summary Sheet not only provides the details of the case but tells the clerks which law enforcement agencies to notify. The TCIC form is sent to law enforcement so they can recognize the respondent and information on the protected person(s). These two forms are crucial and time sensitive to the case. If the respondent is in default, we also must have a Certificate of Last Known Address. While we understand each situation is different, these forms remain a constant.

Reminder regarding TRCP Rule 21c

The District Clerk has received many inquiries as to why some images are not available to view online. The Texas Rules of Civil procedure prohibits the clerk from posting any documents which contain sensitive data online. Below is the specific rule.

RULE 21c. PRIVACY PROTECTION FOR FILED DOCUMENTS

(f) Restriction on Remote Access. Documents that contain sensitive data in violation of this rule must not be posted on the Internet.

To ensure compliance with the rule, please review Rule 21c. in its entirety at <https://www.txcourts.gov/rules-forms/rules-standards/>.

Section Spotlight

District Clerk Accounting



Meet the Accounting Section of the District Clerk's office!

The Accounting section manages the money for all court fees and fines collected in Criminal, Family, Civil, Tax, Juvenile and Records.

The Accounting Manager, Jessica Gray, manages approximately \$31,000,000.00 and 5,000 accounts in the Registry. A fantastic job by Jessica and her team for another year with a flawless audit which included lowering their rejected check count from 7 in FY22 to 2 in FY23.

In May of 2023, the new software system TechShare Court was implemented in the Criminal Section. Mrs. Gray and her team ensured all the financials were migrated and converted from the old criminal system that was from 1988. Accounting successfully worked with the developers, IT department, Criminal management and the Auditors office to ensure proper security and accuracy of all financials in the new software system.

CHANGING THE STYLE/ CAPTION OF THE CASE

During the pendency of a case, when a party/entity is added, dropped or files an Intervention, Interpleader, Cross-Action, Counter-Claim, Third-Party Claim, etc., you are advised **not** to add these parties into the style/caption. The style/caption will always be styled as when the Original Petition was filed unless the Judge signs an "Order to Restyle" the case.

E-filing Request

When you are entering Party and Address information into E-file Texas, please refrain from adding punctuation. Per USPS mailing guidelines, it is preferred that there is no punctuation in names and or addresses. Therefore, it saves the clerks time and will allow for us to more quickly have any requested service documents ready if you will not add punctuation. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.



E-FILING RETURN FOR CORRECTION REPORTS

We have provided e-filing reports below, by section, for FY 2024. Our staff continues to work diligently to process all e-filing in a timely manner. If you have any questions, please contact our office.

DEPARTMENT	INITIAL	INITIAL REJ.	SUBSEQUENT	SUBSEQUENT REJ.	TOT ACCEPT	TOTAL REJ.	GRAND TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
Civil	6,168	1,177	82,328	4,986	88,496	6,163	94,659	6.96%
Tax	2,489	23	12,661	326	15,150	349	15,499	2.30%
Family	5,847	1,501	79,352	3,754	85,199	5,255	90,454	6.17%
AG	2,795	232	15,552	850	18,347	1,082	19,429	5.90%
Felony / Civil	708	153	3,258	47	3,966	200	4,166	5.04%
Criminal			26,966	1,200	26,966	1,200	28,166	4.45%
GRAND TOTALS	18,007	3,086	220,117	11,163	238,124	14,249	252,373	5.98%

Streamlining Family Law: Adapting to Workload Increases with Strategic Reorganization

The Family Law section maintains care, custody, control, and security for all documents filed into the six Family District Courts, the IV-D Child Support Courts, and the two CPS courts located in the Family Law Center. Civil/Family Manager, Monica Foster, oversees multiple teams within our office, including a team of approximately 60 in the Family section. With nearly 16,000 pending cases, and approximately 40% of parties being self-represented, the section experiences a constant influx of traffic daily.

Monica strategically re-deployed several staff members to distribute the additional workload more equitably. Recent rule changes implemented by the Supreme Court of Texas have exponentially increased the workload by requiring every signed order from the courts to be e-filed. Monica and her Family management team, including Assistant Managers Bill Hahn, Bobbie Jackson, and Justin Davis, Supervisor Ian Pfisterer, and Family Law Court Leader Brandye Kear, have worked tirelessly to implement new and refined processes to successfully navigate these unfunded mandates.

The clerks working in the Family Law section collaborate daily with various entities, including other sections of the District Clerk's Office, District Judges and coordinators, the District Attorney's Office, private attorneys, Constables, and the Sheriff's Office. This collaboration ensures the proper collection of fees and the proper handling of all case documents from the beginning to the end of each case's pendency, including post-judgment.

Despite the challenges posed by the increased workload, the Family Law section takes pride in representing the District Clerk and Tarrant County professionally, earning praise from attorneys who practice in other jurisdictions. The section's dedication to adapting and streamlining processes ensures efficient and effective service to the community.

Tarrant County District Clerk Closed Records

The Tarrant County District Clerk's Closed Records Office is continuing to digitize case file records and transition to a fully electronic file management system. This process will ultimately save significant taxpayer dollars by reducing physical storage costs.

As part of this records digitization project, the Closed Records Office is performing regular, bi-weekly destruction trips to securely dispose of eligible paper files once they have been scanned and converted to electronic format.

However, before any original paper documents are destroyed, a rigorous image verification quality control process is carried out. This multi-step verification ensures that all imaged files are complete, legible, and of the highest quality. Only after confirmation that the electronic version fully replicates the original paper file is the physical file approved for secure destruction.

With this digitization project, the electronic file now becomes the official record once verification is complete and the paper file has been destroyed. Maintaining our chain of custody and ensuring superior image quality is critical before any original files are eliminated. Quality control is mandated by Texas Supreme Court.



Contact Us



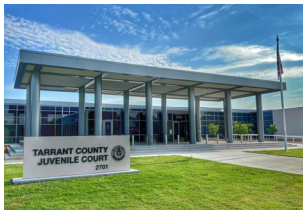
Tim Curry Criminal Justice Center
401 W Belknap Street



Family Law Center
200 E Weatherford Street



Tom Vandergriff Civil Courts Building
100 N Calhoun Street



Scott D. Moore Juvenile Justice Center
2701 Kimbo Road, East Building



E-filing Questions?

Call for assistance:



Family: 817-212-6954

Civil: 817-212-6953

Criminal: 817-884-1342

Felony/Civil

The Felony/Civil section of the District Clerk's office handles Expunctions, Non-Disclosures, Occupational Driver's License, Seizures and Bond Forfeiture cases.

It is located on the 3rd floor of the Tim Curry Justice Center. The Felony/Civil section currently accepts electronically filed documents for Expunctions, Non-Disclosures, Felony Occupational Drivers Licenses, Bond Forfeiture (NISI's) and Seizure cases only.

For filing fee information please refer to the District Clerk website for the most current fees.

Felony/Civil Filing Fees

Our business hours are Monday – Friday 8am – 5pm. During these hours you can reach the Felony/Civil clerks for assistance.

Michelle Farrell-Administrative Felony/Civil Clerk

Lead Clerk – 817-884-1156

Gloria Ewery - Auxiliary

Lead Auxiliary Clerk – 817-884-2514

Israel Rivera - Expunctions

Associate Clerk – 817-884-1231

Jhorleny Montes - Seizures

Associate Clerk – 817-884-2508

**Visit Our
Website**

www.tarrantcountytx.gov

Click on government

Click on District Clerk