
Clerk

Mission Statement:

The Mission Statement of the Clerk's Office is to provide efficient and courteous service to the Courts and citizens of Clallam County. The Clerk's Office believes in providing access to justice for all citizens.

Functions:

The County Clerk is an appointed department head created by the Clallam County Home Rule Charter. The Clerk is the official keeper of the record, both administrative and financial for the Superior Courts. Additionally, the Clerk's Office serves as an agent for the United States Department of State for accepting passport applications.

The Clerk certifies and copies court documents and other written instruments. Prepares monthly statistical reports for the local judiciary. All financial transactions of the Superior Court are administered by the Clerk's Office including court ordered trust funds, civil judgments, and adult felony and juvenile legal financial obligations. The Clerk's Office records Minutes when Superior Court and Family Court are in session.

Long Term Goals:

- *To continue to ensure continuous service improvement through innovation and investment in modern day technological systems which support expanded access and efficient storage of public records. (Example: Two public access terminals in the Clerk's Office lobby. The Clerk's Office has imaged approximately 782,956 documents (not pages, but documents) since April 4, 1995.*
- To continue to identify and implement ways to improve jury administration resulting in greater access to representative juror pools for the courts and greater accommodation of jurors. (Example: Merging the county jury pool list for the draw for Superior Courts and District Courts 1 and 2 so that the juror is only called to one court per jury year, eliminating duplicate summons. For the first time, the Clerk's Office working with Information Technology, can permanently excuse jurors that request to be excused due to age and severe health issues. This prevents the juror with the same health issues in subsequent years to be called for jury service again and have to go through the process of attempting to be excused.
- To continue to be the sub agent in Clallam County for the United States Department of State for the application of U.S. Passports. The Clerk's Office processes approximately 1000 plus passport applications per year. In addition, we also provide U.S. Department of State forms and information on lost or stolen passports, name changes on passports, applications for passport renewal, and we do attend passport training at the Federal Building in Seattle on the new processes for passports. It is anticipated that in the near future U.S. citizens will be required to have passports for Canada and Mexico. In any event, since

9/11, stricter enforcement at customs and immigration have triggered the general public to travel with passports even though certain countries do not require them. The Port Angeles Post Office is also acting as a sub-agent for U.S. Passports, but we have not seen a decrease in service requests to the Clerk's Office. In 2006 and 2007 the Federal Government will be changing the requirements that all U.S. visitors to the Caribbean, Canada, and Mexico will be required to have U.S. Passports for travel.

- The Clerk's Office supports a Court Operations Specialist with the Clallam County District Court for the Pay or Appear Program that is heard by Judge Rick L. Porter. This Court Operations Specialist position reviews payments made, issues bench warrants, quashes bench warrants, and administers the Pay or Appear calendar, as well as answers questions and inquiries from the participants about the Pay or Appear accounts and program. The Clerk's Office contributes \$45,000.00 per budget year into this program. The Clerk's Office receipts payments for the Superior Court participants, docket, scans, and indexes the paperwork for the Superior Court participants, and audits its accounts from inquiry of the participants and adds warrant costs to the accounts receivable and existing judgments of the participants. When each defendant is sentenced in Superior Court, an order is signed ordering him/her to the Pay or Appear Program, fixing a monthly amount for payment, and a starting date, which can be within 30 days, or 30 days upon release from prison and/or jail. To date, the Superior Court has approximately 654 cases in the program. Here is a synopsis of the cases and monies collected to date in 2005 from the Pay or Appear program:

Date	Monies Collected
January 2005	\$18,690.68
February 2005	\$19,307.26
March 2005	\$27,904.44
April 2005	\$17,503.68
May 2005	\$23,004.98
June 2005	\$16,123.93
July 2005	\$19,014.18
August 2005	\$25,000.00
September 2005	\$17,917.63
October 2005	\$19,080.92
November 2005	\$20,335.46
December 2005	\$10,162.63
Totals	\$234,045.79

To continue the support of the Clallam County Drug Court within Superior Court. The Clerk's Office copies pleadings for other parties, issues warrants, indexes court pleadings, and enters Orders of Dismissal for Drug Court graduates. Court time and the number of participants have increased annually since Drug

Court's inception. When a position was cut in the Clerk's Office in January, 2003, we no longer supply a clerk to the adult Drug Court, but we do the other functions listed above on behalf of the adult Drug Court.

Short Term Objectives:

- To keep the office staffed appropriately to cover the three courtrooms that are in operation every day, and the proper number of staff in the office to cover the counter and phones. This will be a challenge in 2006. We are one position less, but the Courts' reduction was a court reporter that retired and the position was not filled with a person but rather an electronic court recording system. The deputy clerk working that courtroom now acts as the clerk and court reporter, having more duties and responsibilities during the course of the hearings and trials. The office has less employees to cover phones, counter, and indexing of our paperwork.
- To enter our work into the proper computer programs as required by Administrator for the Courts, statute, and local court rules.
- To balance our cash register each business day.
- To enter and send to PENCOM criminal and civil bench warrants and domestic violence restraining orders and temporary restraining orders in domestic and paternity cases as ordered. To quash existing criminal and civil bench warrants as ordered, and orders dismissing domestic violence restraining orders and temporary restraining orders in domestic and paternity cases as ordered. We have instituted an additional "tickler" system for Warrants and Orders Quashing Warrants to avoid false arrest lawsuits that may occur when these documents are filed but PENCOM says their records reflect they never received them.
- To call in jurors for jury trials when needed and change the Jury Call-In phone to call off jurors when they are not required.
- To pay out monies per court orders with regard to restitution to victims, fines to the county/state, child support, trust funds for minors, and refund and/or forfeit bail as ordered.
- To invest monies on behalf of defendants, or persons posting monies on behalf of defendants that request interest bearing accounts during the term of their monies being held.
- To invest monies on behalf of minors that the court orders to be held in a fiduciary trust that Clerk acts as Trustee for until said minor attains legal age or upon further court order that disburses the funds. Currently the total monies invested are \$796,728.70.
- To provide copies and information on public court cases to the inquiring public, press, and attorneys in a timely manner and in an electronic/imaged format that they can obtain on the public terminals available in the Clerk's Office lobby. This will be strongly encouraged due to less staff available in the Clerk's Office. A training for attorney's support staff and Sheriff's staff to learn the imaging program was done in 2003 and 2004 to help them learn about the imaging system and how to look up Scomis case information and print their own copies from the lobby public terminals.
- To track and store hearing/trial exhibits for all case types including Juvenile cases until final disposition of the case, or until the appeal has been completed. By statute, the Clerk is to return exhibits via "chain of command" to law enforcement when the exhibits are monies, weapons, or drugs.

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- To physically file court pleadings into files in our vault after imaging and indexing to preserve the paper record for the Superior Court Judges, since at this time they do not use imaged documents for court trials or hearings during the proceedings, rather they have the file.

Accomplishments in 2005:

See also examples given under Long Term Goals.

We have strived to keep current to an increasing workload with a reduction in work hours and staff. Public time and telephone time for the public have also been shortened. We are instituting closed counter windows leaving one counter open during the office hours. This will result in reduced public service to the customers.

We have provided clerks to all public hearings and trials scheduled and heard in Superior Court, Family Court, and the regularly scheduled Juvenile Court hearings that Commissioner Knebes presides over in Family Court and those at Juvenile Court.

The Jury Clerk has printed and processed 7800 jury summons for year 2005. This is an increase over the 6400 in 2004 due to the nature of some cases set for high profile trials in 2004 and 2005. This also takes into account bad addresses that do not allow the jury summons to be properly received by jurors. The Clerk's Office manages the Superior Court jurors by rescheduling their terms, excusing them, and calling them in or off depending on the trial schedule of the Superior Court. The Jury Clerk also spends a great portion of her day counseling and cajoling potential jurors that come into the office to learn why they have been selected and/or how they can be excused or have their term changed.

Processing, preparing paperwork, and sending exhibits on appeals to the Court of Appeals, Division 2, Tacoma, Washington, and the Washington State Supreme Court in Olympia, Washington.

In 2005, the Clerk's Office was granted a 16 hour per week employee to verify imaged court files for verification. We are currently working on years 1995 and 1996. Boxes are stored all through the office that are waiting review as well as a storage room at the old Juvenile facility with boxes of files also waiting to be reviewed and verified. The 16 hour per week employee began working in March, 2005, and currently has processed 21 boxed of files. This is a very important part of our work to make space for more current court files as vault space is valuable and we continue to be in great need of space. Having an electronic record rather than the physical file has become essential to our work.

Performance Indicators:

The Clerk's Office work is reactionary from other entities. We must be ever changing from the statutes and laws of the Legislature to our court work. We must be prepared and ready each day for the hearings and trials that are scheduled by the Superior Court and provide a deputy clerk for each and every hearing to make the public's record. We also index all of our court pleadings and documents into the Scomis computer system that is driven by the Administrator for the Court's Office in Olympia, Washington. Our imaging system was

designed that when we "enter" the work into Scomis that at the same time the pleadings are entered into the imaging system in order for us not to duplicate our two systems, but work them together.

	2003 Actual	2004 Actual	2005 Actual	2006 Goals
Passport Applications Processed	1,193	1,277	1,585	2,000
Revenue to Clerk	\$35,800	\$38,328	\$47,550	\$60,000

Workload Indicators:

Case Filings:	2003 Actual	2004 Actual	2005 Actual	2006 Estimated
Criminal	517	517	651	600
Civil	1,134	1,134	1,232	1,300
Domestic	395	395	394	400
Juvenile Offender	342	342	382	350
Juvenile Dependency	461	461	743	750
Mental Illness	69	69	14	50
Probate/Guardianship	320	320	330	350
Adoption/Paternity	160	160	149	175
TOTAL	3,398	3,398	3,895	3,975

Staffing Level:

	2003 Actual	2004 Actual	2005 Actual	2006 Budget
Full Time Equivalents	8	7.29	7.16	8.10

Operating Budget

Revenues:

	2003 Actual	2004 Actual	2005 Actual	2006 Budget
Taxes	0	0	0	0
Licenses and Permits	0	0	0	0
Intergovernmental Revenues	40,189	32,425	36,968	38,200
Charges for Goods and Services	127,912	136,566	162,550	213,550
Fines and Forfeits	69,154	85,417	91,970	88,240
Miscellaneous Revenues	5,811	13,714	15,403	6,700
Nonrevenues	0	0	0	0
Other Financing Sources	0	9,474	15,279	0
General Tax Support	131,923	163,122	78,469	172,898
TOTAL	\$374,989	\$440,718	\$400,639	\$519,588

Expenditures:

	2003 Actual	2004 Actual	2005 Actual	2007 Budget
Salaries and Wages	273,188	345,196	281,523	312,988
Personnel Benefits	28,036	37,612	29,564	113,481
Supplies	9,888	5,284	10,094	17,000
Other Services and Charges	5,053	13,175	5,120	9,319
Intergovernmental Services	0	0	0	0
Interfund Payments for Services	58,824	39,450	74,338	24,000
Capital Outlay	0	0	0	42,800
TOTAL	\$374,989	\$440,718	\$400,639	\$519,588

Agency Structure:

Clerk of Superior Court
Court Operations Supervisor
Court Operations Specialist 3
Court Operations Specialist 3
Court Operations Specialist 3
Court Operations Specialist 3
Court Operations Specialist 3
Court Operations Specialist 1** (limit to 19 hrs. per wk)

**NOTE: State funded for LFO collections only.