About the Clerk of Circuit Court

Circuit Court Clerk, Christina Ambrose was appointed July 1, 2023, for the remainder of Gayle Ashworth’s term. Her office is charged with more than 800 statutory responsibilities, extending beyond judicial-related business to non-judicial and fiscal activities as well. The Clerk is elected by voters to an 8-year term.

As Chief Operating Officer of the Court, the clerk ensures judiciary members are provided administrative support during courtroom proceedings. In criminal cases, the Clerk makes certain that all proceedings are recorded, administers all criminal case records, and coordinates case scheduling and other case-related activities with prosecutors and law enforcement. The Clerk’s office lends overall judicial support by managing juries, maintaining, and disposing of evidence, issuing arrest and other legal documents to be served, investing/distributing monies on the part of litigates or third-party beneficiaries, collecting criminal fines and costs and serving as repository for the Court’s records.

On the non-judicial side, the Circuit Court Clerk serves as the probated judge in admitting or denying wills to probate and in qualifying executors, administrators, guardians and/or conservators.

The Clerk also serves as the County’s Register of Deeds and is responsible for recording all deeds, deeds of trust, powers of attorney, and real estate liens and releases. Other transactions and recordings processed include judgments, financing statements, marriage licenses, concealed handgun permits, and variety of appointments including ministers, notaries, local commissions and board members and law enforcement officers.

The Clerk is required by statute to permanently preserve and archive the official records of the Court, in addition to probate (estate), real estate, and a vast array of other county records. The Clerk’s Office maintains records dating to mid 1600’s. Records management is an immense and critical responsibility given the volume and types of records maintained.

Fiscal responsibilities include maintenance and investment of trust and condemnation funds as well as the collection of court fines and costs, real estate transfer fees, recordation taxes and a myriad of other fees authorized by statute. This revenue is used to fund citizen services, while fines and costs collected in criminal cases procedure significant revenue for the prosecution and incarceration of criminal defendants.