

## Clerks in the Sunshine: Ensuring Access to Information

Florida's Sunshine Laws are among the strongest in the nation, giving every citizen access to information necessary for participating in the democratic process. These laws protect a citizens' right to know how government operates, making available information such as public events, government meeting minutes and court proceedings. The Clerk's office fully supports and embraces these laws.

As Clerk, one vital service to our customers is providing access to court documents—through the Public Access office, or online on the Clerk's website and through ClerkNet, an electronic case viewing system customized for attorneys. Other responsibilities as County Recorder, Comptroller and Treasurer and Clerk to the Board of County Commissioners include dependability, giving citizens unencumbered access to financial reporting and audit information. Transparency, ease of use, and taking advantage of new technologies that bring the information to you is vital as we make every effort to serve the public well. In addition to printed reports that are available each year, I have made the commitment to add an e-component: "***Clerks in the Sunshine – Ensuring Access to Information***", which compiles all of our financial information, budgets and performance standards in an easy-to find-section on our website.

*Clerks in the Sunshine* shows my commitment to accountability, transparency, efficiency and giving our customers the value they expect from this office. Available at [www.SarasotaClerk.com](http://www.SarasotaClerk.com), *Clerks in the Sunshine* is where you will find definitions and breakdowns of the Clerk's budget process, which, due to recent Legislation, has gone through an enormous change this year, affecting not only what we can do, but how we can continue to serve you. You'll find audit information and financial reporting, to shed light on the financial state of the County. And finally, you'll see our Performance Measures as established by the Florida Legislature and the Clerk of Court Operations Corporation (CCOC). This, a series of imposed measures —which I ratchet up with additional, self-imposed Strategic Planning goals and initiatives, which guide us and demands that we give you our very best effort.

Commitment, accountability, transparency, efficiency and giving our customers the openness they come to expect from any government office—These are the values we strive for.

As always, members of the Clerk's office appreciate the input, patience and support of the Sarasota County Bar Association. We hope you find our enhanced products and services valuable.

Please contact my office at (941) 861-7400 or through [www.SarasotaClerk.com](http://www.SarasotaClerk.com) if we can be of further assistance.