

By Michael K. Jeanes, Clerk of the Superior Court

Improvements to customer access

Customers who receive services at a Clerk's file counter or facility will notice improvements made throughout the Valley. The Clerk's office recently updated and improved the physical access to counters, staff and equipment. Some of these changes were overdue based on standard recommended configurations and others were implemented after successful changes at other locations.

In the summer of 2013, Maricopa County completed a remodel of the Central Court Building that took into account the public's use and needs. Changes for the public included wheelchair-accessible filing counters, a system to speed-up assistance based on the type of filing and staff availability at the counters, and seating space to keep people out of heavy traffic in the adjoining hallways. Internal changes brought employee work spaces into compliance with industry standards and maximized process efficiencies, such as locating cash receipting and victim restitution services closer to vaults and check-writing equipment. Successes from this project have expanded to other facilities.

In February of this year, the marriage license and passport unit at the Southeast Adult facility in Mesa received improvements to county standards and increased space for customers. In May, the Clerk's appeals unit and non-criminal exhibits in adult cases consolidated with the criminal exhibits unit on the fourth floor of the South Court Tower in downtown Phoenix. This consolidation makes it easier for parties, attorneys, and the public to access exhibits and improves efficiency for Clerk staff processing appeals. Through May and June, the file counter and office space at the Durango Juvenile facility (near downtown Phoenix) was updated to match the design at the Juvenile facility in Mesa. These changes improved security while adding privacy for customers.

In early June, the marriage license and passport services section of the Northeast Regional Center (near the intersection of highways 51 and 101) completed its renovations of lowered workstations and new customer seating in addition to cosmetic touchups in its increased space.

This summer, document viewing areas will improve the customer experience at the Clerk's Customer Service Center, located in downtown Phoenix, where the public and media access court documents and where people apply for marriage licenses and passports.

For several years, the Clerk's office has increased its efficiency and availability to interpreters for customers with limited English proficiency. Clerk employees fluent in Spanish handle the vast majority of the Clerk's language assistance needs. The office also

receives assistance through a telephonic conference call system with offsite interpreters certified in hundreds of languages. (The Clerk's resources for language assistance with records and filing matters are separate from the court's resources, where parties appear in hearings.)

Some of the Clerk's improvements are required by federal, state, or county mandates and expectations. Other improvements are the result of customer requests and feedback, including internal staff recommendations based on day-to-day operations and interacting with the public. All of these changes were designed to maximize efficiency and the customer experience.