

Maricopa Lawyer  
Clerk's Corner  
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By Michael K. Jeanes, Clerk of the Superior Court

## **Temporary and Permanent Changes for Clerk's Office in 2014**

### **Temporary Relocation of Services at Southeast Juvenile**

Remodeling of the Clerk's Southeast Juvenile file counters and file counter-support in Mesa began in December 2013 and construction is expected to be complete by March 2014. During construction, the Juvenile file counters and file counter-support will be relocated to the Southeast Adult facility located at 222 E. Javelina in Mesa. All filing and payments related to juvenile cases will need to be made at the Southeast Adult facility during construction. Thank you for your patience while these improvements are made.

### **Reduction of Lengthy Trial Fee**

The \$15 lengthy trial fee authorized by Arizona Revised Statute 12-115 was repealed under the terms of the statute on December 31, 2013. To ensure all clerks of court complied with the change at the same time in an operationally efficient manner, the Supreme Court issued Administrative Order 2013-98 directing that the clerks stop collecting the fee at the close of business on Friday, December 27, 2013. Filings submitted after that date have been assessed the lower fee. The legislature will determine whether to move legislation reinstating the fee in the future.

### **Next Steps for Acceptable Forms of Payment at the Clerk's Office**

Financial management is one of the priorities in the Clerk's strategic plan. Effective January 1, 2014, the Clerk's Office will begin restructuring the forms of payment that are acceptable for various fees and services. Changes will be implemented over time and will effect bond payments, filing fees, and fees for services. The Clerk's move toward guaranteed forms of payment and away from personal and business checks mirrors practices from other courts within Arizona and around the nation.

### **Personal Checks**

Changes to acceptable forms of payment for filing fees, copies, certifications, marriage licenses, the Clerk's portion of processing a passport application, and other Clerk's Office services will be implemented for the public and self-represented parties on January 1, 2014. Payments must be made with cash or by credit or debit card payment, when presented by the cardholder and accompanied by identification matching the cardholder. This change will impact filings across all case types for case-initiation and subsequent filing fees collected at the file counters, through the mail, and at the depository boxes.

Cash and credit or debit cards with a signature are reliable forms of payment. Other forms of payment, such as cashier's checks, money orders, and bank checks can, and have, had

payment stopped or resulted in insufficient funds. This disrupts the court's ability to conduct business and can place the Clerk's Office at substantial financial risk.

### **Business Check processing**

During this transitional restructure; in addition to credit or debit card payments, the Clerk's office will accept clearly identified Business checks from Law firms, Process Servers, Runner services and Certified Document Preparers as a form of payment effective January 1, 2014. Law firms may also pay with checks identified pursuant to Arizona Supreme Court Rule 43(b)(5) as a Trust Account check. The Clerk will no longer accept personal checks written to the Clerk and submitted on behalf of any individual or business entity as a form of payment for fees and services after January 1, 2014.

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