



Sheila Miller
Chief Deputy Clerk

Fred Miller
Macomb County
Clerk & Register of Deeds

Brian Brdak
Chief Deputy Register of Deeds

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CONTACT:
Fred Miller: 586-469-7939

Macomb County Clerk & Register of Deeds Fred Miller Celebrates 100 Days in Office

Macomb County Clerk & Register of Deeds Fred Miller is celebrating 100 business days as head of the Macomb County Clerk's Office, located in downtown Mount Clemens. Miller is serving the remainder of a four-year term that expires at the end of 2020, after winning the November 2018 General Election. The 100-day milestone comes up on Wednesday, April 17.

To mark the 100-day milestone, Miller has released a "100 Day Report to the Community" that details Clerk's Office savings of \$33,333.41 during the "100 Days" and a projected one-year savings of \$404,604.91 for the County budget. The report also details a reduction in customer wait times for all Clerk's Office services and significant reductions in turn-around times for e-filing of Circuit Court civil cases, Law Enforcement Information Network filings and "mail backs" for Register of Deeds' filings. The detailed report can be found at macombgov.org/ClerkRoD.

The first order of business for Miller was meeting each staff member individually and launching an office intranet with a clear "Office Policies and Guidelines" document. He is also in the process of setting up online manuals for all the departments. Miller then set out to immediately improve the customer experience by making adjustments to the buildings' lobbies, ticket kiosk systems, online ordering systems and Jury Room.

"We have already received positive feedback from customers as well as our staff," Miller said. "Our aim was to study the entire customer service experience and eliminate confusion, shorten wait times and provide the services Macomb County residents need quickly and efficiently."

The two-week period just before the 100-day milestone showed average wait times for all Clerk's Office customers over two minutes shorter than the same two-week period one year earlier. Even more dramatic was a reduction of wait times for court section filings by over eight minutes and court file room requests by over five minutes during the same time periods.

By the end of the 100-day milestone, the Clerk's Office has realized a 3 business-day median turnaround on e-filing civil cases at the Circuit Court, a 3 business-day median turnaround of LEIN entries (entries into the Law Enforcement Information Network), a 1 business-day median turnaround of "abstract" entries (judgements affecting Driver's License status), a 1 business-day median
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turnaround of “bindover” entries (referral of criminal cases from district courts) and a 7-day “mail back” for Register of Deeds’ filings.

Miller also recently restored the successful Mobile Office program with its first event in three years at the 42-I District Court in Romeo on April 3. The Mobile Office program features many of the Clerk’s Office and Register of Deeds services without residents having to drive to the Downtown Mount Clemens offices. Services include CPL (Concealed Pistol License) and marriage applications and copies of birth, death, marriage or business records.

Miller has also been proactive identifying ways to save taxpayer money. The Clerk’s Office realized a \$33,333.41 savings during the “100 Days,” and a projected one-year savings of \$404,604.91.

“We identified several services that were either duplicated or are no longer necessary,” Miller said. “Services such as additional cloud storage, internet sites, fax lines and online payment systems have already been eliminated or are in the process of being consolidated. We have also reduced the number of department credit cards to one, which we closely monitor.”

The Clerk’s Office also found a way to reduce the monthly charges for its Vital Records and Register of Deeds indexing systems. At the same time, Miller installed a new server to house the years and years of indexed records.

“We worked closely with our Information Technology department to find ways to save money on services and hardware,” Miller said, “and at the same time improve the security of residents’ vital records.

One of the top challenges of the first 100 days in office was to address the pending retirement of the Clerk’s Office free “Google” online land records “SuperIndex” search service.

“We’ve been told by our vendor that the back-end infrastructure of the Macomb County SuperIndex will no longer be supported due to larger changes with Google,” Miller said. “The cost to migrate the Macomb County platform and extend the SuperIndex in its current form is cost prohibitive. We are currently in the process of receiving and vetting proposals for a full replacement.”

Recognizing the immediate impact the change has on users, Miller is offering an alternative to the Super Index in the Clerk’s Office present US Land Records online system, where online visitors should be able to use the "Home Security Search" function to perform free name-based searches.

Things are definitely looking up for the Clerk’s Office.

“We have a dedicated and efficient staff committed to great service,” said Miller. “Our Court section, Vital Records, Register of Deeds, Elections and Jury Room continue to provide the citizens of Macomb County great service. We receive tremendous support from the many departments in our County government, including our Executive’s Office, Board of Commissioners, Circuit Court, Information Technology, Finance and Human Resources, just to name a few.”

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