

Department: County Management

Program Contact: Rick Teague

Program Offer Type: Existing Operating Program

Program Offer Stage: As Adopted

Related Programs:
Program Characteristics:
Executive Summary

The County Clerk Functions program consists of recording land related and other legal documents, issuance of Marriage Licenses and Domestic Partnership Registrations, acceptance of Passport Applications, creation and maintenance of permanent records, issuance of certified copies, and administration of the Board of Property Tax Appeals (BoPTA). BoPTA is responsible for hearing petitions from taxpayers who disagree with their property value. The Board makes decisions to reduce property values or waive personal property late filing fees based on evidence provided by the taxpayer.

Program Summary

Recording is the process of registering legal documents, thus making them a matter of public record. These documents are primarily related to real property transactions. The recording process requires staff to review every document for statutory compliance. The processes for Recording, Marriage Licenses, Domestic Partnership Registrations and Passport Applications include the collection of statutory fees. With the exception of Passport Applications, the creation and maintenance of general indexes and production of microfilm preserved for permanent retention is a statutory requirement.

For FY 2016, 164,737 documents were recorded, 7,899 Marriage Licenses were processed, 68 Domestic Partnership Registrations were issued and 11,935 Passport Applications were accepted. Last year 735 BoPTA appeals were processed. 6,900 passport photos were taken. All areas within the County Clerk Functions program provide direct customer service by responding to telephone, chat and email inquiries and walk-in customers. The Recording staff assist approximately 15,000 customers at the counter annually and respond to an estimated 15,000 inquiries. The Marriage License and Domestic Partnership staff assist approximately 28,000 customers at the counter annually and respond to a high volume of inquiries that are reported within the Customer Service total of approximately 120,000 annually.

This program also makes available records for customer use. Electronic recording functionality was installed in 2012 and additional service providers were added in subsequent years, improving efficiency and customer service. Currently approximately 70% of recording transactions are completed electronically. Over the past three years records were digitized and a new search engine for PC's used by customers was installed. Future plans, pending County Executive approval, include providing digitized records over the internet for public use.

Passport photos were added in 2014 as an additional customer service. Acceptance of debit and credit cards for point of sale transactions was initiated also. In 2015 the Passport photo and County photo ID processes were transferred under supervision of DART Customer Service and relocated to the DART office.

Performance Measures

| Measure Type | Primary Measure | FY16 Actual | FY17 Purchased | FY17 Estimate | FY18 Offer |
|--------------|---|-------------|----------------|---------------|------------|
| Output | Number of Marriage Licenses Issued | 7,899 | 7,600 | 7,800 | 7,800 |
| Outcome | Number of Accurately Processed Licenses | 7,810 | 7,585 | 7,720 | 7,720 |
| Output | Number of Documents Recorded | 164,737 | 170,000 | 170,000 | 170,000 |
| Outcome | Average Number of Business Days to Return Original Recorded Documents | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 |

Performance Measures Descriptions

The "Number of Accurately Processed Licenses" is the number of licenses which the State of Oregon (Office of Vital Statistics) reviewed and found to be 100% accurate. The remaining licenses were returned to the county by the state for minor corrections. The "Average Number of Business Days to Return Original Recorded Documents" is a measure of compliance with the statutory requirement that documents be returned within 10 business days.

Legal / Contractual Obligation

The County Clerk functions are governed by Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) Chapter 205. Multnomah County Ordinance 948 authorizes couples to voluntarily register as domestic partners. Additional statutes pertaining to this program are found in ORS 106, 107, 409, 432 (marriage/state domestic partnerships); ORS 86, 87, 93, 100 (requirements for recording); and ORS 306 and 309 (Board of Property Tax Appeals). Guidelines for the acceptance of Passports are set by the US Department of State. Through the "County Assessment Function Funding Assistance" (CAFFA) Grant process described in ORS 294.175, the Dept of Revenue determines the acceptable level of assessment and taxation staffing; DART is already at the minimally acceptable level to perform their functions. Any reduction to the BoPTA portion of this Program may jeopardize the grant revenue.

Revenue/Expense Detail

| | Proposed General Fund | Proposed Other Funds | Proposed General Fund | Proposed Other Funds |
|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Program Expenses | 2017 | 2017 | 2018 | 2018 |
| Personnel | \$1,156,493 | \$0 | \$1,159,994 | \$0 |
| Contractual Services | \$97,214 | \$0 | \$75,946 | \$0 |
| Materials & Supplies | \$104,219 | \$0 | \$104,444 | \$0 |
| Internal Services | \$317,602 | \$0 | \$289,617 | \$0 |
| Total GF/non-GF | \$1,675,528 | \$0 | \$1,630,001 | \$0 |
| Program Total: | \$1,675,528 | | \$1,630,001 | |
| Program FTE | 13.70 | 0.00 | 13.50 | 0.00 |

| Program Revenues | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
| Fees, Permits & Charges | \$5,144,000 | \$0 | \$5,861,800 | \$0 |
| Intergovernmental | \$34,435 | \$0 | \$37,153 | \$0 |
| Other / Miscellaneous | \$35,000 | \$0 | \$237,400 | \$0 |
| Total Revenue | \$5,213,435 | \$0 | \$6,136,353 | \$0 |

Explanation of Revenues

A \$60 fee is collected for each marriage license, State and County Domestic Partnership (DP) registration: \$25 to the County General Fund, \$25 to State Domestic Violence fund (for licenses and State DP), \$25 to County Community and Family Services for domestic violence victims (for County DP), and \$10 to Court Conciliation Services. Estimated fees for marriage licenses, domestic partnerships, marriage record copies, amendments to marriage and DP records, and waivers of 3-day waiting period for a marriage license are \$320,125. Passport application acceptance fees are \$298,375 and Passport photo fees are \$69,000; Document Recording page fees retained by the County General Fund are \$5,029,800. Recording record copy fees are \$237,400. A portion of recording fees collected for the Corner Preservation Fund and the County Assessment Function Funding Account are credited to the County Clerk Fund pursuant to ORS 205.320(2) are projected at \$120,500. Fees for filing a Board of Property Tax (BoPTA) Appeal are estimated at \$24,000. BoPTA is allocated \$37,153 of the \$3,715,272 County Assessment Function Funding Assistance (CAFFA) Grant.

Significant Program Changes

Last Year this program was: FY 2017: 72025A DART County Clerk Functions

For FY18, transferred allocation of .20 FTE Finance Supervisor from County Clerk Function Program 72025A-18 to Tax Revenue Management Program 72027-18