



**SHARON R. BOCK**

Clerk & Comptroller  
Palm Beach County

# Media Guide

## Court & Legal Records

### **ABOUT THE CLERK & COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE**

The Florida Constitution established the independent office of the Clerk & Comptroller as a public trustee, responsible for safeguarding public records and public funds. Clerk Sharon Bock is directly elected by and accountable to Palm Beach County residents.

In addition to the roles of Clerk of the Circuit Court, County Recorder and Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners, the Clerk & Comptroller is the Chief Financial Officer, Treasurer and Auditor for Palm Beach County.

Learn more about the Clerk's office at [www.mypalmbeachclerk.com](http://www.mypalmbeachclerk.com) and @ClerkPBC.

### **IMPORTANT NUMBERS AND WEBSITES**

#### **Clerk & Comptroller's Communications Department**

561.355.2468 ▪ [media@mypalmbeachclerk.com](mailto:media@mypalmbeachclerk.com) ▪ [www.mypalmbeachclerk.com](http://www.mypalmbeachclerk.com)

#### **15<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court - Administration**

*For questions about pool arrangements, cameras in courtroom and other courtroom logistics*

561.355.1872 ▪ [www.15thcircuit.com](http://www.15thcircuit.com)

#### **Florida Department of Law Enforcement - Media Relations**

850.410.7001 ▪ [www.fdle.state.fl.us](http://www.fdle.state.fl.us)

#### **Public Defender's Office:**

561.355.7500 *main* ▪ [www.pbcgov.com/opd](http://www.pbcgov.com/opd)

#### **Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office - Media Relations**

561.688.3082 ▪ [www.pbso.org](http://www.pbso.org)

#### **State Attorney's Office - Public Information Office**

561.355.7247 ▪ [www.sa15.state.fl.us](http://www.sa15.state.fl.us)

## **MEDIA SERVICES**

### [eCaseView](#)

Public can search civil, criminal and traffic cases as well as view and print case documents. [eCaseView](#) provides easy access to case information including court dates, charges, sentences, complaints, parties, document images (viewable from late 2008) and more. Cases or documents that have been sealed, expunged or are confidential pursuant to general law will not be viewable. All case documents viewed in [eCaseView](#) are redacted to protect confidential information, pursuant to Florida law.

The following case types are not available in [eCaseView](#) (no data or documents):

- Juvenile
- Adoption
- Mental health
- Tuberculosis

Only the attorney of record can see document images for the following case types:

- Guardianship
- Probate
- Family

### **View On Request (VOR)**

To protect sensitive and confidential information that may be contained in case records, certain documents will initially only be viewable upon request. These documents will be marked with a lock icon in [eCaseView](#).

Generally, documents will be reviewed and approved for viewing within three (3) business days – taking into account the size of the document, the amount of potentially sensitive/confidential information contained within it and the current review workload.

The first user wishing to view such a document – whether they are an attorney, registered user or anonymous public – must request it through [eCaseView](#). Clerk staff will then review the document to confirm accurate redaction of all sensitive and confidential information. Once the document is approved, it will be available to view by all users going forward (subsequent users will not need to submit another VOR request).

While a VOR document is being reviewed, a clock icon will be shown. Any user may click on the clock icon to request email notification when the document is ready to view online.

### **Records at the Courthouse**

Reporters can also get certified copies of court records at the courthouse. The cost is \$1 a page, which is set by [Florida Statute](#).

There are four courthouses where files may be located. The abbreviated letters at the end of the case number help you determine where the file is being held. *For instance, case 502011CF000111XXXXWB is located in Belle Glade.*

- Main Courthouse, 205 N. Dixie Hwy., West Palm Beach
- North County Courthouse, 3188 PGA Blvd., Palm Beach Gardens
- South County Courthouse, 200 W. Atlantic Ave., Delray Beach
- West County Courthouse, 2950 State Road 15, Room S-100, Belle Glade

### **Custom Reports**

Custom reports are provided in Excel or CSV files and can include any case data available to the public. A statute number, case type or other identifiable case information is needed to develop a custom report. The cost for a custom report is \$60 per hour of development and \$5 for the report. Requests from the media must be submitted through the Clerk's Communications department.

### **General Statistics**

Clerk's Communications department provides free statistics of information that already exists, such as the number of marriage licenses issued, dissolutions filed or domestic violence injunctions requested.

### **Juror Information**

The Clerk's office can provide juror information, unless a judge has sealed that information.

### **Official Records**

Copies of official records are available at any courthouse location for \$1 a page, or free through the Clerk's office online Official Records search at [www.mypalmbeachclerk.com](http://www.mypalmbeachclerk.com).

### **Probable Cause (PC) Affidavits**

PC affidavits are available after first appearance for arrests that take place prior to 5 a.m. Any arrests after 5 a.m. may not be received until the following business day. Media may request PCs from first appearance by sending an e-mail to [media@mypalmbeachclerk.com](mailto:media@mypalmbeachclerk.com) before 8 a.m. PCs will be made viewable through [eCaseView](#).

Requests must be made before 8 a.m. to give clerks enough time to redact and scan the requested PCs before first appearance. First appearance usually begins at 9:30 a.m. in the courtrooms of the Criminal Justice Complex at Gun Club Road in West Palm Beach.

### **Reviewing Case Evidence**

Reporters can review evidence after a case is closed and the evidence has been submitted to the Clerk's Evidence department, located in the Circuit Criminal department on the third floor of the Main Courthouse. Appointments must be scheduled through the Communications

department to review, copy or photograph case evidence. Members of the media must supply their own equipment to scan documents or photographs, and are subject to an additional charge equal to the hourly rate of the employee who must supervise the review.

### **Search Warrants**

Search warrants are in the Clerk's Circuit Criminal division, unless a judge has sealed them.

## **OTHER RESOURCES**

**Court transcripts or audio recordings:** These are provided by Court Administration's Court Reporting Department. Orders for transcripts or audio recordings can be made by calling 561.355.3745.

**Hearing times and information:** The Clerk's office has dates for upcoming court hearings available online in the court records search, but they are not updated if last-minute changes are made. The most up-to-date information will be available from the judge's judicial assistant who keeps the judge's calendar. Contact information for judges is available on the [15<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit's website](#).

**Mug shots:** These are available through the [Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office booking page](#). Go to [www.pbso.org](http://www.pbso.org), click on the [Arrests and Jail](#) Info tab, and select Booking Search. Search by the suspect's name, and click on a suspect's booking number to find the mug shot.

## **TIPS TO MAKE A REPORTER'S JOB EASIER**

### **Notify Us for Court Files**

Files may be in storage or may need further review and redaction before release and could take several days to retrieve and/or made available. A member of the Clerk's Communications team can coordinate with the various court departments to get the necessary information and will notify reporters once a file is available.

### **Social Media**

Follow and share @ClerkPBC on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Google+ and YouTube.

### **Have a Booking Number Available when Requesting PCs**

Booking information is found at [www.pbso.org](http://www.pbso.org). Providing a booking number makes it easier for clerks and for the Communications team to find the requested PC – particularly if a suspect has multiple arrests.

**Create a Media Account**

Reporters who frequently request case files should ask their news organization to set up a media account to pay for copies and custom reports for case stats. The number of monthly copies requested are recorded and invoiced to the news organizations at the end of the month.

Credit card payments can also be accepted for requested documents from organizations that do not have an account with the Clerk's office.

**Contact Main Contacts**

561.355.2468 and/or [media@mypalmbeachclerk.com](mailto:media@mypalmbeachclerk.com) during office hours, 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

**Visit our Newsroom page.**

Clerk news releases, contacts for the Communications department, links to useful resources, and other information: <https://www.mypalmbeachclerk.com/newsroom.aspx>.