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Collin County District Clerk

Preservation, Restoration and
Records Archive Plan

Fiscal Year 2021

COLLIN COUNTY DISTRICT CLERK

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FY'21 Preservation, Restoration and Records Archive Plan

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to define the FY'21 plans for the restoration and preservation of records maintained by the Collin County District Clerk's Office. In general, the State Library and Archives Commission requires **permanent retention** of all case papers and trial dockets dated prior to 1950, *and* "case papers from any period that, because of notoriety or significance, might possess enduring value." In addition, certain court documents after 1950 are required to be retained permanently, or for specific periods of time. It is the intent of the District Clerk to follow the guidelines set forth by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission as they relate to records in the District Clerk's office. This document addresses the restoration and preservation needs of the Collin County District Clerk's records archive only, no other departments are addressed.

Funding

The Texas Legislature has provided a means to raise revenue for records management and preservation of court records. Records preservation and restoration efforts are funded by the collection of fees added to specific types of cases filed in the District Clerk's Office as found in the Texas Government Code Sections 51.305 (District Court Records Technology Fee) and 51.317(b)4(c) (Records Management Fee). These fees are "user" fees and are an alternative to raising taxes or spending from the general fund. The fee amounts are approved by the Collin County Commissioners' Court, and itemized as part of the County's annual budget. The funds generated from the collection of these fees are used, as mandated, for preservation and restoration services performed in connection with maintaining the District Court archives.

Historically Significant Records

In FY'12 and FY'13, funding was used to professionally preserve and restore 59 historical books for use by generations to come. These restored treasures include Collin County District Court Civil Minutes and Index books dating from 1845-1952, and Criminal Court Minutes and Index books dating from 1845-1960.

In FY'15, funding was used to restore the oldest case files which are on permanent retention. Criminal and civil case files dating from 1845-1871, which had been stored in boxes and file folders were showing significant deterioration. These case files were professionally preserved and placed in 77 disaster safe books.

In FY'17, criminal and civil case files dating 1872-1875 were professionally preserved, digitized and placed in 88 disaster safe books. In addition, the District Clerk's office, with the assistance of a temporary employee, scanned over 650,000 pages of paper case files from 2000-2010 into the case management system, allowing for employees and the public to retrieve documents in a digital format.

In FY'18, funding was used to restore the oldest case files which are on permanent retention. Criminal and civil case files dating from 1876-1880, which had been stored in boxes and file folders were showing significant deterioration. These case files were professionally preserved and placed in 32 disaster safe books.

In FY'19, funding was used to restore the oldest case files which are on permanent retention. Criminal and civil case files dating from 1881-1885, which had been stored in boxes and file folders were showing significant deterioration. These case files are currently being professionally preserved and placed in disaster safe books.

In FY'20, funding was used to restore the oldest case files which are on permanent retention. Criminal and civil case files dating from 1886-1890, which had been stored in boxes and file folders were showing significant deterioration. These case files are currently being professionally preserved and placed in disaster safe books. During FY'20 we received 78 disaster safe books and shelving. We are currently waiting on the remainder binders for the year 1890.

In FY'21 the process to restore and preserve documents maintained by the Collin County District Clerk's office is an ongoing project as records continue to age and deteriorate. In FY'21 the District Clerk's office will continue the preservation of our oldest court records which are on permanent retention and are deteriorating. Contingent upon the availability of funding, the criminal and civil case files dating between 1891 -1896 will be professionally preserved, digitized and placed in disaster safe books. In addition, the District Clerk's office will continue to scan civil and family paper case files from 2003-2010, and criminal paper case files from 1988-2004 into the case management system