

Paula Sollami-Covello, Esq.



County Clerk's Corner Newsletter...At Your Service

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Welcome from the County Clerk

It's hard to believe that it's Spring already! It seemed like just yesterday that we were ringing in a new decade.

Unfortunately, as you probably know, 2020 has come with its fair share of challenges already, most notably the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak. This unprecedented pandemic has crippled our world, our country, our state, and our county.

Now more than ever, we need to help to stop the spread. Don't leave home unless absolutely necessary. Wash your hands thoroughly. Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands. Check in on elderly/vulnerable friends and family. These and other precautions can help stop this virus from spreading.

Through this crisis, my office is still offering several key services. Timely recording of documents can continue online via njcountyrecording.com. However, due to the office closure, you will need to sign up using an outside vendor. Both Simplifile and CSC are established and responsible vendors. You can contact Simplifile at 1-800-460-5657 or simplifile.com. CSC can be reached at 1-866-652-0111 or erecording@cscglobal.com.

If you are a member, you can access the NewVision Search System at [records.mercercounty.org/RecordsNG Search](http://records.mercercounty.org/RecordsNGSearch).

You can also search for any property in the county by starting a free account at pip.mercercounty.org.

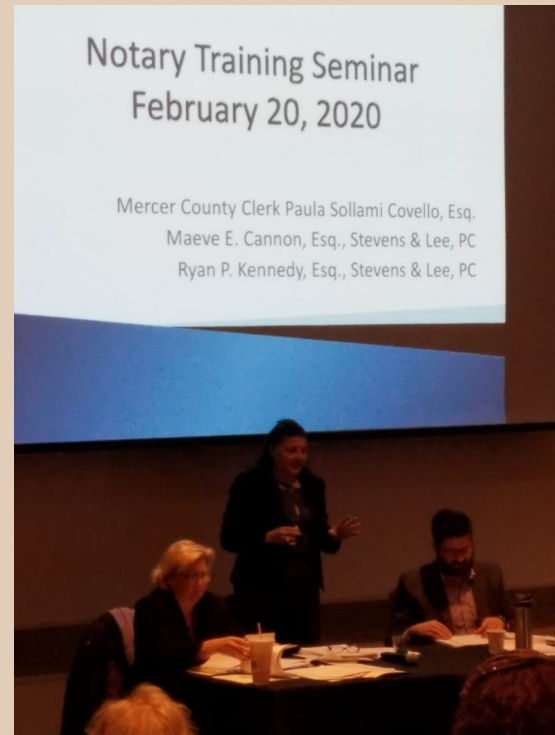
Furthermore, the Primary Election, originally scheduled for June 2, has been postponed to **July 7**. Please see page 2 for more details.

We encourage all Mercer County voters to apply to vote by mail in anticipation of the Primary Election to minimize the risk of spreading the virus.

We will resume normal operations when Mercer County re-opens. At that time, we ask that people exercise caution and not visit our office if experiencing any cold symptoms, or when they can transmit documents by mail and fax.

For more information on the COVID-19 outbreak, please visit covid19.nj.gov.

Thank you for reading and please stay safe!



On February 20, we held our Notary Education Class at the Conference Center on the campus of Mercer County Community College. Attendees were taught several in-depth topics on the field of notarization. The County Clerk was joined by Maeve Cannon and Ryan Kennedy, attorneys from Stevens and Lee, Attorneys at Law.

Mercer County Clerk Explains how REAL ID Relates to Passports

The Federal Government has extended the requirement for citizens to have REAL ID from October 1, 2020 to October 1, 2021. As a result, this lessens the urgency for passport books and cards, which meet REAL ID requirements.

Mercer County Clerk Paula Sollami Covello announced that with the closure of County passport offices, this announcement could not come at a better time. "People do not have to feel stressed about needing a passport to meet federal REAL ID requirements at this time and this will allow only those who need them for international travel to visit the offices when they reopen."

Whereas a REAL ID-compliant drivers' license will require nine points of identification and an appointment at a Department of Motor Vehicles location to obtain, a passport will only require an original birth certificate and a DS-11 (application for passport) for first-time applicants.

Although the Mercer County Clerk's Office in Trenton and County Connection in Hamilton are currently closed due to orders put forth by the Mercer County Executive to avoid the spread of COVID-19, passport processing is a service offered during business hours. Additionally, passport staff from the Clerk's Office regularly goes into community to process applications as well. **If it is deemed safe to do so**, passport acceptance agents will be on hand to accept applications at the Ewing Township Municipal Building at 2 Jake Garzio Drive, on June 11 from 3pm to 7pm. More dates will become available as the spring progresses.

Both the County Clerk's Office in Trenton and the County Connection in Hamilton will reopen to the public when all other Mercer County agencies are reopened as well.

For more information about passport services, as well as updates on closures related to COVID-19, please visit the County Clerk's website: <http://www.mercercounty.org/government/county-clerk-/office-services/passports>.

New Deadlines for Primary Election

Due to the concerns surrounding COVID-19, the Primary Election in New Jersey has been rescheduled for July 7. Because of this, deadlines related to the election have changed. All deadlines below are for the Primary Election. The new deadlines are as follows:

June 16: Final day to register to vote

June 30: Deadline to apply for a mail-in ballot by mail

July 6 by 3:00 pm: Deadline for in-person mail-in ballot applications

July 7: Primary Election Day; polls open at 6am and close at 8pm

County Clerk's Office Hosts "A Celebration of Black History"

To celebrate Black History Month, on Wednesday, February 26, the office of Mercer County Clerk Paula Sollami Covello hosted "A Celebration of Black History." The ceremony consisted of musical selections, hopeful remarks for the future, and historical presentations pertinent to the African-American story in greater Mercer County.

The ceremony began with a performance of "Lift Every Voice and Sing" performed by singer and native Trentonian Howard Crossland, to which the entire crowd joined in. Following thoughtful opening remarks by County Clerk Sollami Covello and Deputy Clerk Walker Worthy, Reverend Dr. John H. Harris, Jr. of Galilee Baptist Church delivered remarks on the history of the African-American struggle, the need for a focus on unity, and his work as a pastor. Reverend Harris's wife, DeLois, was one of the original members of the Little Rock Fifteen (later reduced to nine), a group of African-American students who enrolled in the previously segregated Little Rock Central High School despite heavy resistance.

Also on hand to perform "Battle Hymn of the Republic" on trumpet were Ian Grimley, who works at the Mercer Clerk's Office, and Hamilton resident Nadia Leunig.

Those in attendance were also treated to two presentations relating to the history of African-Americans in Mercer County. Elaine Buck and Beverly Mills, lifelong residents of Hopewell and Pennington, respectively, discussed their book *If These Stones Could Talk*, a culmination of ten years of research into historical records of Hopewell Valley, the Sourland Mountain Range, and Central Jersey. Patricia Donahue, a resident of East Windsor, delivered a PowerPoint presentation explaining her research after she found records of slave manumissions in her house, written before slavery was fully abolished in New Jersey.

"I am very appreciative of the people who worked to make this ceremony memorable," said Mercer County Clerk Paula Sollami Covello. "It's a wonderful thing when we focus on the contributions of so many great African Americans who have made our County, State, and Nation into what it is today. The historical contributions also were fitting, as we are an office that maintains archives from the County."

Assemblywoman Verlina Reynolds Jackson, Mercer County Executive Brian Hughes, and many other local, county, and state officials were in attendance.

See pictures on page 3.

Did You Know?

You can now register to vote at age 17 so that you will be able to vote at age 18. Here is the state link: <https://www.state.nj.us/state/elections/voter-registration.shtml>

County Clerk's Office Hosts "A Celebration of Black History"

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From left: Assemblywoman Verlina Reynolds Jackson, Patricia Donahue, Mercer County Clerk Paula Sollami Covello, Hazel Stewart, Reverend Dr. John J. Harris, Jr., Mercer County Executive Brian Hughes, Beverly Mills, Elaine Buck, and Deputy Clerk Walker Worthy, Jr.

Deputy Clerk Walker Worthy, Jr. delivers remarks.



The Mercer County Clerk performs weddings! Weddings are offered once per month by appointment only. You can call 609-989-6820 to receive more information. We will begin scheduling weddings again after the county reopens for business.

It is important to note that we do not issue marriage licenses. You should call the municipal clerk of either bride or groom to obtain a license.

Friendly Reminder

The County Clerk is responsible for collecting Financial Disclosure forms for State and County employees and that date is April 30th of each year. This date has not yet been extended by the State Department of Community Affairs. If you work for the County, please check your email or make sure you file.



Beverly Mills and Elaine Buck present their historical findings to attendees.

County Clerk Paula Sollami Covello addresses the crowd.



About the Mercer County Clerk's Office

The County Clerk's Office offers many services that Mercer County residents and businesses use every day. The Clerk's Office files and records all documents concerning real estate ownership and transfer, registers small business trade names, processes U.S. passport applications, and swears in notary public applicants.

The office offers photos for people seeking passports and County and Veteran ID cards, and Gold-Star Parent ID cards as well. The County Clerk also has certain election responsibilities – including the printing of ballots, counting of votes cast by electronic machines and the issuance of vote-by-mail ballots. Elections information can be found on our website at <http://www.mercercounty.org/government/county-clerk/elections>.

Get in Touch

**Mercer County Clerk's Office
209 South Broad Street
Trenton, NJ 08608**

**Mercer County Connection Satellite Office
957 State Highway 33
Hamilton, NJ 08690**

Visit our website: mercercounty.org/government/county-clerk

By Phone

Main number: 609-989-6464

Deputy Clerk Walker Worthy, Jr., and Administrative Offices: 609-989-6353

Press Inquiries: 609-278-7161

Elections: 609-989-6494

Indexing/Imaging: 609-989-6476

Business Registrations: 609-989-6469

Passports: 609-989-6473

County ID/Veteran ID/Gold Star Parent ID: 609-278-7108

Recording: 609-989-6466

Fax: 609-989-1111

County Connection: 609-890-9800

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Property Information Portal: pip@mercercounty.org

