



# Paula Sollami-Covello, Esq.

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

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### Welcome from the County Clerk

Happy New Year! 2020 was a challenging year for many of us. Despite that, in 2021, we at the County Clerk's Office are still performing key services every day to help our constituents in many ways.

I am thankful to all the voters for entrusting me to a fourth term as Mercer County Clerk. Serving you has been the honor of my life, and I'm glad to be able to help bring to fruition many projects to help all Mercer County residents. I'd also like to thank Governor Phil Murphy for doing the honor of swearing me into my fourth term.

We are announcing that our monthly "Notary Nights", held the first Thursday of November, will be held in our Trenton office through June because of the pandemic. That office is located at 209 South Broad Street, Courthouse Annex. Notary Nights are usually held in the Mercer County Connection satellite office in Hamilton Township. Notary nights are held from 3 to 7:30pm and are a chance for notaries public to begin or renew their commissions as notaries.

We also are a leading County Clerk's Office in preventing fraud. We offer a **Property Fraud Alert Service**. There is no cost for users to sign up to receive free e-mail alerts when someone tries to record a lien or take any action on a property. This system is designed to notify property owners to fraudulent activity because property crime is on the rise. It can be accessed by going to [http://propertyalert.mercercounty.org/PropertyAlert?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](http://propertyalert.mercercounty.org/PropertyAlert?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery).

Last year, the County Clerk's Office was part of the statewide effort to make the 2020 Primary and General Elections primarily vote-by-mail, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We sent out 250,000 mail-in ballots and saw a record turnout of votes, even among the unique circumstances. We had several drop boxes strategically located throughout the County for voters to place their voted ballots, and although it took very hard work, it was a success, and most importantly, it was a smooth election with all votes counted.

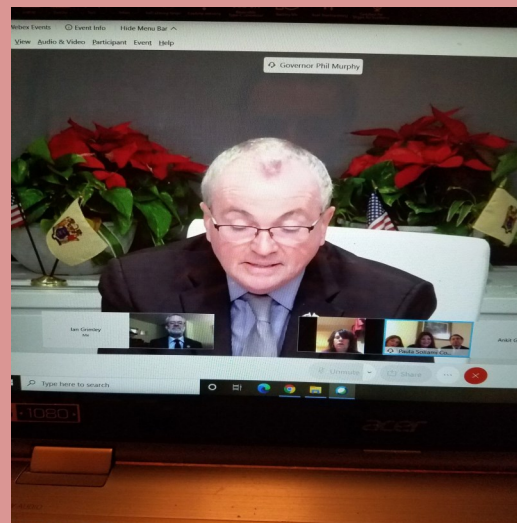
Going forward, I hope to oversee the purchase of new voting machines with a verifiable paper trail. Voters deserve to have the knowledge and assurance that elections will be free and fair, and these voting machines will be secure.

As always, we are taking precautions in our office to help fight the COVID-19 pandemic. If you visit our office, we ask that you wear a mask or other face covering. Additionally, social distancing protocols will be followed. If you are experiencing cold or flu-like symptoms, please stay home.

For all the services we offer, please give us a call at 609-989-6465 or visit our website at [www.mercercounty.org/government/county-clerk](http://www.mercercounty.org/government/county-clerk).

Again, I thank you for putting your faith in me to serve the people of this County. I look forward to working hard over the next term on your behalf!

Mercer County Clerk Paula Sollami Covello was recently sworn into her fourth term as Mercer County Clerk by Governor Phil Murphy! She was sworn in alongside Deputy Clerk Walker Worthy and re-elected County Commissioners John Cimino and Lucy Walter.



## County Clerk Announces Notary Night Schedule for 2021

Mercer County Clerk Paula Sollami Covello has announced the monthly Notary Night schedule for 2021. Notary Nights will continue to be held on the first Thursday of each month, from 3:00pm to 7:30pm. Notary Nights are usually held at the Mercer County Connection satellite office in Hamilton. The office is currently open, but offering limited services due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Therefore, they will be held at our Trenton office on 209 South Broad St until at least June. A mask or face covering must be worn to enter. The remaining dates for 2021 are as follows:

**March 4**

**April 1**

**May 6**

**June 3**

**July 1**

**August 5**

**September 2**

**October 7**

**November 4**

**December 2**

To be sworn in by Mercer County Clerk's Office staff as a new notary, prospective notaries must apply and have their applications signed by a legislator. If you file your application online it will be sent to your legislator electronically. After the State of New Jersey processes your application, you will be sent your commission by mail. You must take your oath of office. The fee is \$15; checks and money order are accepted. Prospective notaries will also need a photo ID and their certificate on hand to be sworn in.

For current notaries public, an executive order signed by the Governor enables those whose commissions were due to expire to continue to perform notarial acts. The order allows any notaries public whose existing commissions have expired during the Public Health Emergency (March 2020-present) to continue to act as a notary as long as they enter the commission expiration date shown on their most recent renewal certificate when doing so. If they fail to renew their commission during the 90-day period following the last day of the PHE, their commissions will expire and they will have to reapply in order to conduct notarial acts.

For more information about notaries public and for updates on office openings and closings in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, please visit the Mercer County website at <http://www.mercercounty.org/government/county-clerk-/office-services/notary-public>, or call the office's main number at 609-989-6465.

## Mercer County Clerk Launches New, Convenient Scheduling Feature

Mercer County Clerk Paula Sollami Covello announced a new scheduling feature offered by the Mercer County Clerk's Office for public use. As of February 16th, customers can make online appointments for the various services offered by the Mercer County Clerk's Office.

The new scheduling program allows individuals to schedule an appointment in the Trenton Office for passport processing, County and Veteran ID cards, notary public swearings-in, and to reserve a time slot to research in the public records room. There are also appointments available for many other services offered at the Office of the Mercer County Clerk provided during business hours.

The program can be found on the Mercer County Clerk's website at <http://www.mercercounty.org/government/county-clerk> under the tab that states "Make an Appointment."

"We started using this scheduling tool internally and the staff loved using it, so we decided to offer it to the public on a permanent basis," stated Sollami Covello.

*Continued on Page 3*

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Governor is allowing both paper and electronic petitions to be used for the upcoming Primary Election on June 8. They can be found on our website by going to <http://www.mercercounty.org/government/county-clerk/elections>. You can also view instructional videos on how to download, complete, and return petitions.

## Election-Related Deadlines

Although the General Election isn't until November, there are still very important elections which will be held before then. Please note the following important deadlines!

**April 5:** Deadline to file a petition for the primary election (4pm)

**April 13:** Deadline to apply to vote by mail for school board and fire district elections (for certain municipalities only)

**April 16:** Ballot drawing for Primary Election (virtual)

**April 20:** Fire district elections (Hopewell and Pennington Boroughs only)

**May 18:** Deadline to register to vote before Primary Election

**June 1:** Deadline to mail an application to vote by mail for Primary Election

**June 7, 3:00pm:** Deadline for in-person mail-in ballot applications for Primary Election

**June 8:** Primary Election Day; polls close at 8pm

**July 26:** Annual School Board candidate filing deadline at 4 pm (no determination has been made on whether petitions for the General election will be accepted in an electronic format)

## About the Mercer County Clerk's Office

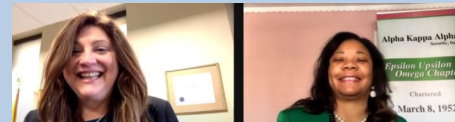
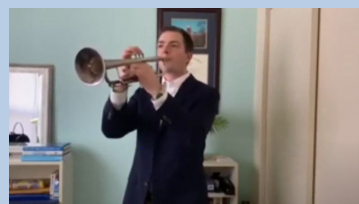
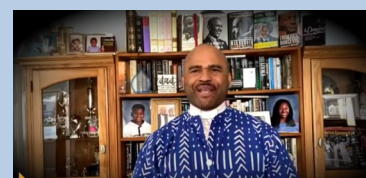
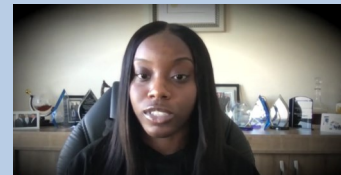
The County Clerk's Office offers many services that Mercer County residents and businesses use every day. The Clerk's Office files and records all documents concerning real estate ownership and transfer, registers small business trade names, processes U.S. passport applications, and swears in notary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



Recently, the Mercer County Clerk's office held its second annual Black History Month celebration! Special thanks to our speakers, performers, and New Jersey Buzz for the marvelous production job so this could be shown virtually.

You can view the program by watching it on YouTube at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mhdViDYNQ\\_g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mhdViDYNQ_g) or viewing it on our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/MercerCountyClerk/videos/1164851697296408/>.



(Clockwise): Lawrence High School student LaNae Lopez reads Maya Angelou's "Still I Rise"; Reverend Darrell Armstrong (Shiloh Baptist Church) discusses Black History in our area; Mercer County Clerk Paula Sollami Covello interviews Adrienne King, President of Alpha Kappa Alpha local chapter, on Vice President Kamala Harris's connection to the national sorority; Deputy County Clerk Walker Worthy delivers remarks; County Clerk employee Ian Grimley plays "Battle Hymn of the Republic" on trumpet; Reverend John Harris (Galilee Baptist Church) delivers remarks on the future of America, Melda Grant sings "America the Beautiful" and "Lift Every Voice and Sing."

## Mercer County Clerk Launches New, Convenient Scheduling Feature

*Continued from Page 2*

Appointments have been required in the County Clerk's Office since last Spring, when Covid-19 forced offices to minimize crowding and implement social distancing policies. Both the Trenton office and the Mercer County Connection Office in Hamilton offer appointments for passports. However, the County Clerk stated that even after the pandemic is in the rearview mirror, this scheduling program will continue to be utilized for the Trenton office. While we may not always require appointments when the pandemic is over, we will still offer people the convenience of reserving a time certain for services. Many people like the idea of planning for their service in advance. "We are always working to make life easier for our residents," added Sollami Covello. The Mercer County Clerk's Office is located at 209 S. Broad Street in the Courthouse Annex in Trenton, NJ. For more details on how to obtain a passport in Mercer County, please see <http://www.mercercounty.org/government/county-clerk/office-services/passports>.



# Mercer County Clerk's Office Delivers Donated Goods to Charitable Organizations

Following the Mercer County Clerk's annual holiday drive benefiting area charities, Mercer County Clerk Paula Sollami Covello and staff delivered a record amount of monetary donations this year to local animal shelters. The County Clerk and her staff annually collect toys and clothing to benefit the Children's Home Society. They also collect pet food and pet supplies and monetary donations for the Trenton Animal Shelter and EASEL, the Ewing animal shelter (although money can be directed to other local shelters upon request). The contributions come from staff in the Clerk's Office, the Mercer County Courthouses and from the public. These items are then distributed by the Clerk and her staff.

Last week, the Clerk's Office also delivered over \$1,000 along with pet food and supplies to the Trenton Animal Shelter, and a large amount of dog and cat food and animal supplies to EASEL. The County Clerk's Office also delivered over \$700 in monetary contributions, toys and clothing for the Children's Home Society before the Christmas holiday.

"If the public puts their trust in you to serve them, your service should extend beyond your official title," said Sollami Covello. "Of course, this would not be possible without those generous souls and businesses who donated to help our local charities."

By collecting toys, clothing, pet food and money, we hope to make the holidays brighter for the children in need and for those forgotten holidays during the winter months, she explained.

This year, the office noted a rise in monetary donations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. People were more comfortable mailing a check, and the charities appreciate this just as much. It assists them in continuing to provide needed services.

The Children's Home Society has offered many services to vulnerable families including women's health services, clinical and behavioral counseling, educational opportunities, and more. For more information about how to donate or get involved, you can visit their website at <https://www.chsofnj.org/> or call them at 609-695-6274.

Both EASEL and the Trenton Animal Shelter are committed to reducing the euthanizing of homeless animals in Mercer County. They are also accepting donations and volunteers. For more information, you can visit EASEL's website at <https://www.easelnj.org/> or call the Trenton Animal Shelter at 609-989-3254.

Finally, to donate, you may still send a check to the organizations listed above, and note it is part of the County Clerk's drive, or mail one to the Mercer County Clerk's Office, P.O. Box 8048, Trenton, NJ 08608.



Mercer County Clerk Paula Sollami Covello and Mercer County Deputy Clerk Walker Worthy, Jr. pose with toys donated to the Children's Home Society of NJ.



Selina Ortiz (center) and Ian Grimley (right) employees of the Mercer County Clerk's Office, deliver donated supplies to the Children's Home Society.



Mercer County Clerk Paula Sollami Covello (right) poses with EASEL volunteers and donated supplies.



Mercer County Clerk Paula Sollami Covello (left) and Mercer County Deputy Clerk Walker Worthy, Jr. (right) pose with a \$1000 check donated to the Trenton Animal Shelter.

# 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](http://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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**Twitter: [@MercerClerk](https://twitter.com/MercerClerk)**

**Property Information Portal: [pip@mercercounty.org](mailto:pip@mercercounty.org)**