



Communications Department Charter

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Purpose Statement & Mission

The Lee County Clerk of the Court & Comptroller is responsible for more than 1,000 constitutional and statutory duties for nearly 800,000 county residents. The constitutional office's primary functions are to safeguard the integrity of all court records and official records, and serve as the county's comptroller and auditor.

These services play a vital role in people's lives, and it's critical that the public thoroughly understands where and how to access them. As an elected representative, the Clerk is directly accountable to citizens, and proper communication with constituents helps build awareness, understanding, and trust.

The **mission** of the Communications Department is to provide clear, ethical strategic communication and develop mutual beneficial relationships between the Clerk's office and key stakeholders.

Background

The Communications Department was chartered in April 2021. The department was compiled with the goal of enhancing the public's understanding of the Clerk's office through expanded outreach, educational seminars, and improved, regular communication.

To ensure messaging is clear and not misconstrued with other government offices, the office first underwent a brand analysis and three different logos were replaced with one logo. This change also ensured the office was compliant with the seal registered with the State of Florida.

To quickly enhance communication and customer service with the public and the media, the Communications Department also established new communication channels with the launch of five new social media accounts and a customized email signature for all staff. A rebranded newsletter and updated website were launched in 2022, and new channels of internal communication are being researched for 2023. The department also oversees Facilities & Mail Services, which plays a vital role in quickly addressing many critical needs throughout the office to ensure operations run smoothly.

Communications Principles

- Develop and implement communication strategies and tactics to inform and educate the public about Clerk services and resources
- Enhance internal communication channels and information to provide for a more knowledgeable, cohesive team
- Manage the office's reputation and visual brand through streamlined, consistent, effective, and ethical messaging
- Assist with the implementation or promotion of technology improvements that allow for communications related goals to be achieved effectively and efficiently



Organizational Context

The Communications Department plays a key role in the Clerk's office's ability to achieve its Guiding Principles, specifically to:

- Support overall local government effectiveness and efficiencies
- Establish trust through communicating purpose and executing promise
- Model exceptional work habits, train for success, coach to achieve them

The department also takes a lead on achieving two strategies of Goal 2 in the office's Strategic Plan: to Enhance the Public Trust Through an Effective Public Affairs Strategy; and to Enhance our Online Presence and Virtual Services.

In accordance with its mandate, the Communications Department plays a vital role in enhancing the customer's experience. When information is presented properly and efficiently, it reduces the need to visit or call the office, thus decreasing foot traffic and calls to the call centers. As outlined in this charter, Communications works closely with all departments to proactively manage the dissemination of information about Clerk services. Facilities & Mail Services works closely with Communications to ensure messaging and signage are consistent and properly displayed for customers and employees.

In addition, the Communications Department spearheads all fundraising activities for the United Way.

Primary Responsibilities & Communication Channels

The Communications Department provides ethical strategic communication that builds mutually beneficial relationships between the Clerk's office and its publics. The knowledge, skills and abilities provided by the Communications Department include brand and reputation management, media relations, public relations campaigns, crisis communications, employee communications, public affairs, social media, special events and activities, video production, and website management. Communications manages a minimum of five social media accounts and one external newsletter, which reach thousands of Lee County residents monthly.

Communications produces outreach programs to educate the public about Clerk services; develops office signage, branding, and collateral materials; publishes monthly newsletters; and handles all media inquiries and interviews. Facilities & Mail Services provides one point of contact for all Clerk maintenance and/or janitorial needs; acts as liaison between Clerk and County for building updates and changes; and provides mail services for Clerk, Administrative Office of the Courts, and State Attorney's Office.



Public Affairs Strategy

The Communications Department instituted a new public affairs strategy to help meet objectives outlined in the office's Strategic Plan. The department is focused on developing educational content, promoting services, and building community connections to increase public awareness and trust in the Clerk's duties and functions. Special attention will be provided to communities in the southern part of Lee County. This will be accomplished through:

- Innovative seminars and workshops
- Partner agency collaborations
- An enhanced social media presence
- Effective internal and external newsletter communications
- Easy-to-access online tools and resources
- Engagements with community social clubs and organizations

Informational "How To" seminars are produced monthly to educate the public about key Clerk services. Registration for the seminars is posted periodically at www.leeclerk.org/seminars. The information is also shared in video format to further awareness through the Clerk's digital platforms. A DIY toolbox of presentations, videos, and other resources to elevate the customer experience will be provided on the Clerk's website.

For more information on the impact of our Public Affairs Strategy, [subscribe to our newsletter](#), and view our social media pages and [news releases](#).

Key Stakeholders

The Communications Department customizes communications to different key stakeholders depending on the message needing to be conveyed. The primary audience for many communications are attorneys, paralegals, pro se litigants, judicial and constitutional partners, property owners, and employees. Communications also establishes and maintains relationships with county and business leaders and groups, title agencies, realtors, and more.



Department Structure

The Communications Department is composed of highly trained professionals. The Chief Communications Officer is a nationally recognized, accredited public relations professional with more than 15 years serving Clerk & Comptrollers in Palm Beach, St. Lucie and Lee counties. He has received more than 40 local, state, and national awards for his work in public relations strategies and tactics. Joseph is slated to serve as 2024 chair of the Public Relations Society of America, the premier association for public relations and communications professionals with more than 24,000 members worldwide.

