TO: Ken Burke, CPA  
Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller  
Ex Officio County Auditor  

FROM: Hector Collazo, Jr., Director  
Division of Inspector General  

SUBJECT: Audit of Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller  
Automated Copy Request System Integrity  

DATE: April 4, 2013  

I am enclosing a copy of the audit dated April 4, 2013 on the above-referenced audit.  

cc: Myriam Irizarry, Chief Deputy Director, Court and Operational Services  
Constance Daniels, Director, Court and Operational Services  
Jim Bennett, County Attorney  
Claretha N. Harris, Chief Deputy Director, Finance Division  
Ernst & Young
DIVISION OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
Ken Burke, CPA
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND COMPTROLLER
PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

Audit of Clerk of the Circuit Court and
Comptroller Automated Copy Request System Integrity

Hector Collazo, Jr., Director
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APRIL 4, 2013
REPORT NO. 2013-10
April 4, 2013

The Honorable Ken Burke  
Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller

At the request of Clerk’s Management we have conducted an audit of the Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller Automated Copy Request System Integrity. Our audit objectives were to:

- Determine if access to the Automated Copy Request System is appropriately restricted to prevent unauthorized alterations or deletions of data.
- Determine if customers are charged appropriately for copies.
- Determine if copy request fees are posted to the correct ledger accounts.
- Determine if copy request fees cover the cost of administering the Automated Copy Request System.

The Automated Copy Request System (System) is not a statutory requirement, but was designed to provide a convenient method for customers to electronically request copies of official records and aid Clerk’s staff in fulfilling those requests.

We conclude that controls for access to the Automated Copy Request System to prevent unauthorized alterations or deletions of data need improvement. Procedures need to be put into place to better manage County user access authorization and removal. In addition, better control over voided transactions will ensure all voids are valid. Customers are charged appropriately for copies per the mandated Florida Statute fees. However, the Automated Copy Request System does not support pricing for all types of copies a customer may request. Copy requests are not always handled timely and the fees collected may not always be posted to the correct ledger accounts. We did not evaluate if copy request fees cover the Clerk’s operating costs to provide the service since the fees are mandated per Florida Statutes. However, opportunities to make the system more efficient and effective were identified. Opportunities for improvement are presented in this report.

We appreciate the cooperation shown by the staff of the Clerk of the Circuit Court during the course of this review. We commend management for their responses to our recommendations.

Respectfully Submitted,

Hector Collazo, Jr., Director  
Division of Inspector General
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INTRODUCTION

Synopsis

The Automated Copy Request System (System) is not a statutory requirement, but was designed to provide a convenient method for customers to electronically request copies of official records and aid Clerk’s staff in fulfilling those requests. Due to System functionality limitations and lack of procedures, copy requests are not always being processed efficiently and effectively. Implementing the recommendations contained in this report will support better customer service, improved processing methods, and accurate data on copy requests.

Scope and Methodology

At the request of Clerk’s management we conducted an audit of the Clerk of the Circuit Court Automated Copy Request System Integrity. The audit covered application access controls, copy request invoicing and processing, copy request fee posting to the financial records, and cost effectiveness of the application.

The objectives of our audit were to:

- Determine if access to the Automated Copy Request System is appropriately restricted to prevent unauthorized alterations or deletions of data.
- Determine if customers are charged appropriately for copies.
- Determine if copy request fees are posted to the correct ledger accounts.
- Determine if copy request fees cover the cost of administering the Automated Copy Request System.

In order to meet the objectives of our audit we:

- Interviewed individuals responsible for processing requests through the Automated Copy Request System to obtain a clear understanding of the process.
- Reviewed application documentation and access controls.
- Tested, on a sample basis, invoicing and payments to determine if copy request fees were appropriately charged and accounted for.
- Evaluated if copy request fees cover the cost of administering the application.

We performed such other audit procedures that we considered necessary in the circumstances.

Our audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing and the Principles and Standards for Offices of Inspector General, and accordingly, included such tests of records and other auditing procedures, as we
considered necessary in the circumstances. The audit period was July 1, 2010 through March 31, 2012. However, transactions and processes reviewed were not limited by the audit period.

**Overall Conclusion**

Controls for access to the Automated Copy Request System to prevent unauthorized alterations or deletions of data need improvement. Procedures need to be put into place to better manage County user access authorization and removal. In addition, better control over voided transactions will ensure all voids are valid. Customers are charged appropriately for copies per the mandated Florida Statute fees. However, the Automated Copy Request System does not support pricing for all types of copies a customer may request. Copy requests are not always handled timely and the collected fees may not always be posted to the correct ledger accounts. We did not evaluate if copy request fees cover the Clerk’s operating costs to provide the service since the fees are mandated per Florida Statutes. However, opportunities to make the system more efficient and effective were identified.
# Action Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINDING NO.</th>
<th>FINDING (CAPTION) RECOMMENDATIONS</th>
<th>MANAGEMENT RESPONSES</th>
<th>IMPLEMENTATION STATUS</th>
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<td>Opportunities Exist To Improve The Automated Copy Request System To Make It More Efficient And Effective.</td>
<td>[Checkmark]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>We recommend Clerk’s management work with Business Technology Services (BTS) to implement the Automated Copy Request System improvements. We recommend management submit a formal request to BTS via the Support Center to begin the process.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Automated Copy Request System Orders Are Not Always Priced By Clerk Staff Timely.</td>
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<td>A</td>
<td>We recommend Clerk’s management:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Draft a policy outlining standard timeframes for processing Automated Copy Request System orders including a timeframe for pricing orders.</td>
<td>[Checkmark]</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>Draft a procedure on utilizing Automated Copy Request System reports including how and when to run the &quot;Order Status Queue&quot; report to enable more timely processing.</td>
<td>[Checkmark]</td>
<td>[Checkmark]</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>Discuss with BTS methods to implement automated reminders via email or the Automated Copy Request System prompting staff to price an order once it has been outstanding a set amount of days.</td>
<td>[Checkmark]</td>
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<td><strong>The Automated Copy Request System Does Not Accommodate Pricing For Several Types Of Copy Requests.</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>We recommend Board Records management request BTS to update the System program to accommodate a $0.20 charge for two-sided copies of Board Records documents. In addition, we recommend Clerk’s management determine the feasibility of adding additional charges to the System program to accommodate other types of copy requests such as for documents more than 14 inches by 8 1/2 inches and audio recordings on CDs for BCC minutes. Feasibility will depend on factors such as the number of requests received for these types of copies and the amount of effort needed to update the program logic to accommodate these types of requests.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Voided Copy Request Transactions Do Not Require A Void Reason To Be Recorded In The System.</strong></td>
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<td>We recommend Clerk’s management:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Request BTS to add a comment field to the administration area of the Automated Copy Request System that will allow Clerk staff to record the reason for a voided transaction.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINDING NO.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Voided transactions periodically be reviewed by Clerk's management to ensure the transaction was voided by an authorized staff member and the reason is valid.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>There Is No Formal Process For Obtaining Approvals For Automated Copy Request System Access.</strong></td>
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<td>We recommend managers of each Clerk's area that process copy requests (i.e. Board Records, Civil, Misdemeanor/Traffic/Felony, Probate, and Recording), or the Director of Court and Operational Services, authorize each request for user access to the Automated Copy Request System. We recommend that a BTS request ticket be created for each instance of granting a user access to the System.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><strong>Automated Copy Request System User Access Procedures Require Updating.</strong></td>
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<td>A</td>
<td>We recommend:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Clerk's management establish procedures for submitting removal requests to BTS for removing user access when an employee leaves employment with the County or when the job function no longer requires access to certain applications. A standard notification procedure and request form can be developed and used to ensure access deactivation has occurred. In addition, a follow-up procedure should be put into place to ensure BTS receives, acknowledges, and completes the change timely.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>BTS establish timeframes for removing user access when an employee leaves employment with the County or when the job function no longer requires access to certain applications.</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Improper Automated Copy Request System Programming Logic Is Causing Copy Request Fees To Post To The Wrong Accounting Ledger.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>We recommend Clerk's management work with BTS to update the Automated Copy Request System logic for posting copy request fees to the Clerk's Accounting System ledger accounts. The logic should use a staff input field that includes edit checks for data integrity.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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</table>
Background

The Clerk of the Circuit Court Automated Copy Request System (also known as the Online Copy Request and Payment Center) is not a statutory requirement, but was designed to provide a convenient method for customers to electronically request copies of official records and aid Clerk's staff in fulfilling those requests. It enables customers to submit online copy requests and pay for such copies via the use of credit cards. Online copy requests are available for the following areas:

- Probate Court Records
- Civil Court Records
- Criminal/Traffic Court Records
- Official Records/Recording
- Board Records

Internal customers of the Automated Copy Request System (System) are the Clerk's staff while external customers are users of the Clerk's public website. Public access via the website only allows accessing the System's order center, payment of the order, and inquiry of the order. Internal access allows performance of the same functions above in addition to pricing of orders and viewing of reports. The System is accessible to the public via the Internet. The Clerk's staff has secure access through the Clerk's Intranet site via the Clerk's Administration Page to fulfill requests. The Clerk's staff uses their network login and password to access the System.

Once a customer submits a copy request, the request is forwarded to the applicable department:

- Board Records
- Civil Court Records
- Misdemeanor/Traffic/Felony Criminal Court Records
- Probate Court Records
- Recording Services

Managers of each department assign staff to process the requests received through the System. Clerk's staff calculates page counts and costs. Copy requests are charged as follows:
• Copy of Court or Official Record documents = $1.00 per page
• Copy of Board Records documents = $0.15 per page
• Certified Copy = Copy fee plus $2.00 per document
• Postage (if applicable) = Actual Cost
• Fee per transaction for payment by using credit card = 3.5 % per order

The customer is invoiced for the total cost and provided a secure link for payment via the email address they provide. Copies are sent via United States Postal Service or email. All certified copies must be physically mailed to the requestor.

The technical support for the system is administered by the Business Technology Services Department. The application interfaces with the Clerk's Fee Accounting System and credit card payments are automatically fed into the accounting records. The application automatically generates emails to customers through Microsoft Outlook.
OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Our audit disclosed certain policies, procedures, and practices that could be improved. Our audit was neither designed nor intended to be a detailed study of every relevant system, procedure, or transaction. Accordingly, the Opportunities for Improvement presented in this report may not be all-inclusive of areas where improvement may be needed.

1. **Opportunities Exist To Improve The Automated Copy Request System To Make It More Efficient And Effective.**

There are opportunities to improve the Automated Copy Request System (System) to make it more efficient and effective. We met with the management of several areas that process copy requests including Board Records, Criminal Court Records, Civil Court Records, and Recording Services. Management had numerous recommendations on how to improve the System. In addition, several System limitations were noted during the audit. Recommendations include:

**Utilize Automated Reminders:**

- Program the application to send a prompt notice, preferably via email, to staff for required actions that are due (i.e. price a request, ship documents, close a request, etc.).
- Program the application to send an automated email to the customer stating that the order was voided due to non-payment for orders that were automatically voided because payment was not received within seven calendar days.

**Improve Application Controls:**

- Configure application access levels that provide for assigning roles (i.e. staff role, management role, read only role, etc.).
- Assign permission to void copy requests to only the management role.
- Draft a procedure to ensure application orders that are paid/fulfilled at the counter are appropriately closed in the application. Currently, if a customer pays at the counter, the request either remains unfulfilled in the application or is voided. This skews reporting and how many copy requests are completed.
- Create a standard shipping fee schedule. Currently, shipping fees are estimated and not consistent.
- Program the application to record the User ID of staff that prices and completes copy request orders.
- Program the application to include a void comment box that is required to be completed.
- Program the application to include automated field edit checks (i.e. case and/or citation numbers must be at least 11 characters).

Implement Application Enhancements:

- Program the application to include comment fields for both the customer and staff.
- Program the application to accommodate pricing for two-sided copies. Currently, staff adjust the order shipping fee or number of pages to produce the correct amount due (Board Record copies are $0.15 per page or $0.20 per page for a two-sided copy).
- Program the application to include a field for audio CD requests (i.e. transcript of Board of County Commissioners meetings). Currently, staff charge $3.00 per CD; however, the application does not support this type of copy request nor the pricing.
- Program the application to include a field to record how the copy request was completed (i.e. email, mail, in person pick-up, etc.).
- Program the application to accommodate voiding or inserting a zero page count for part of the order (one or more documents). Currently, the entire order must be voided if a line item cannot be processed.
- Program the application to accommodate other search criteria for finding orders. Currently, staff can only search by order number and the customer often does not know this number when calling for assistance.
- Program the application to include an additional address field with the entire customer address to enable copy and paste for creating mailing address labels.
- Revise automated field edit checks to allow alpha characters in the zip code field so international requests can be accepted and processed.
- Include a PayPal payment option.
- Program the application to display the description of the type of documents that departments can fulfill when the customer hovers over "Add Civil" (or other court document type).
- Program the application to display different colors for the order status field.
- Program the application to accommodate staff updates to a customer copy request prior to customer payment.
- Program the application to include a drop-down box on the customer order screen for selecting document type (i.e. with the following values - Traffic Citation, Complaint, Information, Disposition, Violation of Probation, etc.).
- Update the payment confirmation email sent to customers to state that certified copies are physically mailed and all other copies are emailed.

Implement Report Enhancements:

- Add filtering to the "Aging Report" to enable filtering by court type.
- Configure an automatically rendered "Price Pending" report.
- Program all reports for the ability to sort by customer name and order date.
- Revise the "Charges Report" (used to calculate revenue for a given time period by order number) to subtotal on court type. Currently, the revenue calculated is only by total.

Audit Services, Division of Inspector General
Clerk of the Circuit Court
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Management did not perform a post implementation review in a reasonable period after the System was in production to ascertain possible improvements related to use and effectiveness of the application.

Enhancing the System functionality will promote copy request orders being processed in the most efficient and effective manner. For example:

- Utilizing automated reminders will increase staff order processing effectiveness and decrease the number of orders that are priced and/or shipped untimely. Automatically emailing the customer when their order is voided for non-payment may reduce the number of customer calls/emails staff receives.
- Improving application controls will enhance the quality of information provided by the application.
- Implementing application enhancements will increase staff order processing efficiency.
- Implementing report enhancements will provide management with more meaningful information.

We recommend Clerk's management work with Business Technology Services (BTS) to implement the Automated Copy Request System improvements. We recommend management submit a formal request to BTS via the Support Center to begin the process.

Management Response:

Concur. Request will be submitted to the Business Technology Services Department and monitored for completion.

2. Automated Copy Request System Orders Are Not Always Priced By Clerk Staff Timely.

There were 307 copy request orders not priced by Clerk staff within seven calendar days and 154 copy request orders placed prior to July 1, 2012 were not priced by Clerk staff as of July 11, 2012. We performed testing to determine if copy request orders were priced in a timely manner. Clerk's internal procedure is to price copy request orders as soon as possible, usually the same day as the order is placed. We used seven calendar days as reasonable for testing since there is no formal timeframe policy in place. We obtained a file of all Automated Copy Request System orders placed between July 1, 2010 and March 31, 2012 from BTS. The file contained 15,397 records as of June 8, 2012. We used data analytics software to perform testing on the file and filtered for all records where an order was placed, but not priced within seven calendar days of the order date and not voided. We summarized the results by order number so orders were only counted once. We found 307 records where orders were priced, but not within seven calendar days of the order being placed as follows:
The 307 records where orders were priced, but not within seven calendar days of the order being placed, were for the following document court types:
In addition, we found 154 records where orders were placed prior to July 1, 2012 and still waiting to be priced as of July 11, 2012 as follows:

The 154 records where orders were priced, placed prior to July 1, 2012, and still waiting to be priced as of July 11, 2012, were for the following document court types:
The 154 orders not priced as detailed above are in addition to the 307 orders that were priced untimely.

There is no formal policy with timeframes for Clerk staff to price copy request orders received via the Automated Copy Request System. There is no formal procedure in place to run the System "Order Status Queue" report filtered by court and status (price pending) which would provide Clerk's staff a list of orders waiting to be priced. In addition, there is no automated reminder (email or otherwise) prompting staff to price an order once it has been outstanding a set amount of days.

Automated Copy Request System customers are not being provided efficient service. Outstanding orders may cause an increase in phone calls thus reducing the productivity of Clerk staff.

We recommend Clerk's management:

A. Draft a policy outlining standard timeframes for processing Automated Copy Request System orders including a timeframe for pricing orders.

B. Draft a procedure on utilizing Automated Copy Request System reports including how and when to run the "Order Status Queue" report to enable more timely processing.

C. Discuss with BTS methods to implement automated reminders via email or the Automated Copy Request System prompting staff to price an order once it has been outstanding a set amount of days.

Management Response:

Concur. Management agrees with the recommendation that there is a need to develop procedures to establish timeframes for the copy request processing process.

3. Automated Copy Request System Orders Are Not Always Shipped By Clerk Staff Timely.

There were 134 copy request orders paid prior to July 1, 2012 that were not shipped by Clerk staff as of July 11, 2012. We performed testing to determine if copy request orders were shipped in a timely manner. Clerk's internal procedure is to ship copy request orders within five business days of payment receipt. We used seven calendar days as reasonable for testing to take into account weekends and/or holidays. We obtained a file of all Automated Copy Request System orders placed between July 1, 2010 and March 31, 2012 from BTS. The file contained 15,397 records as of June 8, 2012. We used data analytics software to perform testing on the file and filtered for all records where an order was paid for, but not shipped and not voided. We summarized the results by order number so orders were only counted once. We found 134 records where orders were paid for prior to July 1, 2012 and still waiting to be shipped as of July 11, 2012 as follows:
The 134 records where orders were paid for prior to July 1, 2012 and still waiting to be shipped as of July 11, 2012 were for the following document court types:

There is no formal procedure in place to run the System "Order Status Queue" report filtered by court and status (shipment pending) which would provide Clerk's staff a list of orders waiting
to be shipped. In addition, there is no automated reminder (email or otherwise) prompting staff to ship an order once it has been outstanding a set amount of days.

Automated Copy Request System customers are not being provided efficient service. Outstanding orders may cause an increase in phone calls thus reducing the productivity of Clerk staff.

We recommend Clerk’s management:

A. Draft a procedure on utilizing Automated Copy Request System reports including how and when to run the "Order Status Queue" report to enable more timely processing.

B. Discuss with BTS methods to implement automated reminders via email or the Automated Copy Request System prompting staff to ship an order once it has been outstanding a set amount of days.

Management Response:

Concur. Some departments have procedures in place to better enable them to track and monitor these requests. Management does agree that some technology changes may be needed to better track and monitor these copy requests.

4. The Automated Copy Request System Does Not Accommodate Pricing For Several Types Of Copy Requests.

The Automated Copy Request System does not accommodate pricing for two-sided copies of Board Records’ documents ($0.20), copies of public records’ documents more than 14 inches by 8 1/2 inches ($5.00), and audio recording copies of BCC minutes ($3.00 per CD). Clerk staff of Board Records work around the System and add the additional fee for two-sided copies to the shipping charge or change the number of pages in order to provide customers two-sided copies at the reduced cost of $0.20 per page (two-sided) vs. $0.15 per page (single sided). Requests for copies of public records’ documents more than 14 inches by 8 1/2 inches and audio copies of BCC meeting minutes are processed outside the System.

The Automated Copy Request System was not programmed to accommodate certain types of copy requests such as two-sided copies and audio recordings. Working around the System to accommodate pricing for two-sided copies of Board Records’ documents is in the best interest of the customer; however, this skews shipping and/or page count amounts that management may use for reporting purposes. Having an automated system to handle copy requests promotes efficiency. The system should accommodate as many copy request types as feasible.
in order to decrease the number of requests that must be processed manually through the counter, phone, and/or email.

We recommend Board Records management request BTS to update the System program to accommodate a $0.20 charge for two-sided copies of Board Records’ documents. In addition, we recommend Clerk’s management determine the feasibility of adding additional charges to the System program to accommodate other types of copy requests, such as for documents more than 14 inches by 8 1/2 inches and audio recordings on CDs for BCC minutes. Feasibility will depend on factors such as the number of requests received for these types of copies and the amount of effort needed to update the program logic to accommodate these types of requests.

Management Response:

Concur. Management in Board Records agrees with the recommendation and will move forward with a report to Business Technology Services.

5. Voided Copy Request Transactions Do Not Require A Void Reason To Be Recorded In The System.

Clerk staff can void a transaction at any point in the copy request process and the Automated Copy Request System does not require a comment field to be completed as to the reason why the transaction/request is being voided. In addition, the System will automatically void a transaction/request when a customer does not pay within seven calendar days. However, this void reason is not recorded in the System. The System does not allow deletions of transactions by Clerk staff. Transactions must be voided if they are not to be processed, which changes the amount of the transaction to zero, but keeps a record of it in the database.

All voided transactions must be performed by an authorized individual and documentation to support the void must be recorded. The Automated Copy Request System does not contain a field to record the reason for a void. Without proper documentation to support voided transactions, Clerk’s management cannot ensure the voids are authorized and valid.

We recommend Clerk’s management:

A. Request BTS to add a comment field to the administration area of the Automated Copy Request System that will allow Clerk staff to record the reason for a voided transaction.

B. Voided transactions periodically be reviewed by Clerk's management to ensure the transaction was voided by an authorized staff member and the reason is valid.
Management Response:

Concur. The current procedure is that a supervisor has to approve, sign off, and provide the reason for the voided validation; however, this process can be improved. Management will implement the recommended changes.


A standardized new-user setup procedure that requires appropriate approvals prior to Automated Copy Request System access being granted does not exist.

We spoke with the BTS programmer responsible for the Automated Copy Request System to discuss the current process of setting up new users in the administration area of the System. Access is granted by adding the user to the Lightweight Directory Access Protocol directory group "CRPClerk." All access requests should be routed through the Help Desk where a ticket is created and assigned. Access is then granted by either the Help Desk staff or the BTS programmer responsible for the System by adding the User's ID to the "CRPClerk" group. However, there are no criteria established or authorization required for granting access. In addition, BTS tickets are not always issued for the access request.

The Pinellas County Security Policy dated May 2007, under IV. Information, D. Roles, states,

"1. Information Owners (Elected and Appointed Officials and their designees)
The term "owner" to government must necessarily have a different meaning than in the private sector. An Information Owner in a government context means that person or persons who are legally charged with and granted the authority for acquiring, creating, and maintaining information and information systems within their assigned area of control.
a) Responsibilities of Information Owners... • Authorizing User access to information..."

And it further states:

"3. Information Users
Information Users are individuals who have been granted explicit authorization to access, modify, delete, and/or utilize information by the Owner."

Without a standardized new-user setup process that requires appropriate approvals prior to System access being granted, unauthorized access to the System could potentially be granted. In addition, without a log of access requests via the Pinellas County Support Center ticket process, there is no audit trail. Audit trails can provide a means to help accomplish several related objectives, including individual accountability, reconstruction of events, intrusion detection, and problem analysis. Through the ticket process,
an audit trail is created, which includes information to establish what events occurred and when, and who (or what) caused them.

We recommend managers of each Clerk's area that process copy requests (i.e. Board Records, Civil, Misdemeanor/Traffic/Felony, Probate, and Recording), or the Director of Court and Operational Services, authorize each request for user access to the Automated Copy Request System. We recommend that a BTS request ticket be created for each instance of granting a user access to the System.

Management Response:

Partially Concur. Management disagrees with the recommendation for a BTS ticket to be created in order for staff to gain access to the Copy Request System. Currently, access is granted by our Clerk's Technology staff upon request from management with the necessary information about the employee needing access. We are working to develop a procedure in which a written request is submitted to the Clerk's Technology group to add/delete staff from the system.


User access to the Automated Copy Request System is not removed on a timely basis after users terminate employment or no longer perform job duties requiring access. An access removal process is in place to remove user access from the Automated Copy Request System for those staff members that no longer require access, but is not being followed. Managers of each area that have access to the Automated Copy Request System (i.e. Board Records, Civil, Misdemeanor/Traffic/Felony, Probate, and Recording) are responsible to request via the BTS Customer Support Center removal of user access. The standard BTS ticket process is followed; however, the procedures do not address timeframes for management to submit removal requests nor for BTS to implement the user access changes.

Appropriate staff has access to the administration area of the Automated Copy Request System except as noted. During testing, we found seven staff members who no longer work for the County or do not need access for their job function. We obtained a list of staff with access to the administration area of the Automated Copy Request System from BTS and reviewed the appropriateness of user access. Our testing found the following staff members' access to the System needs to be removed:

- 1 BTS staff member no longer works for Pinellas County.
- 3 Clerk's Technology staff members do not need access to the Automated Copy Request System to perform their job function.
- 3 Criminal Court Records staff members no longer work for Pinellas County.

The Pinellas County Security Policy, dated May 2007, under II. Users, D. Privilege Control, states,
"3. Reporting Changes in User Duties to Systems Administrators
Management must promptly report all significant changes in end-user duties or employment status to the computer system administrators handling the user-IDs of the affected persons.

4. All System Access Privileges Cease When Access is No Longer Required
All information systems privileges must be promptly terminated at the time that a user ceases to provide services that require access."

Management is not following their internal procedure and the procedure has no timeframes established for the process of removing user access to the Automated Copy Request System. Untimely access removal increases the risk of unauthorized access to the System.

We recommend:

A. Clerk’s management establish procedures for submitting removal requests to BTS for removing user access when an employee leaves employment with the County or when the job function no longer requires access to certain applications. A standard notification procedure and request form can be developed and used to ensure access deactivation has occurred. In addition, a follow-up procedure should be put into place to ensure BTS receives, acknowledges, and completes the change timely.

B. BTS establish timeframes for removing user access when an employee leaves employment with the County or when the job function no longer requires access to certain applications.

Management Response:

Concur. Management agrees that a procedure for the removal of user access is necessary when an employee leaves employment with the Clerk and/or County Government. Removal of all employee computer access is forwarded to the Clerk’s IT staff for their action. The request would include access to the Copy Request System.

8. Improper Automated Copy Request System Programming Logic Is Causing Copy Request Fees To Post To The Wrong Accounting Ledger.

The Automated Copy Request System field that the application program uses to determine which accounting ledger to post copy request fees to is unreliable for accuracy.

While testing if the copy request fees posted to the correct Clerk’s Fee Accounting System ledger accounts based on the copy request court document type and the ledger description, we noted 20 out of 28 orders tested were posted to "traffic" type ledgers although the court type of the document requested was not always "Criminal" (traffic documents are requested through the "Criminal" Court).
During the customer ordering process, the customer inputs vital information into the System including the case number the requested document relates to. The case number field does not have automated edit checks, nor is it required to be completed by the customer to continue the ordering process. In addition, there is no manual process performed by the Clerk staff to review and validate the case number. Once the order is placed and the fee paid by the customer, the Automated Copy Request System interrogates the portion of the case number field known as the "suffix" to determine which type of case the copy request is for, which then determines which Clerk’s Fee Accounting System ledger the money is to be applied to.

The logic states that if the court type does not meet any of the criteria specified, then the money is automatically applied to a "traffic" type ledger. In addition, if no case number is input by the customer, or the "suffix" is invalid, the money defaults to the "traffic" type ledger.

Data used for business processing must be input by those individuals responsible for the business process. Input validation controls should be embedded in the application to verify that the field input is accurate, complete, and valid. Since the copy request fee receipts are broken out into ledgers to be remitted to other agencies, the allocation to certain agencies or funds within an agency may be incorrect.

We recommend Clerk’s management work with BTS to update the Automated Copy Request System logic for posting copy request fees to the Clerk’s Accounting System ledger accounts. The logic should use a staff input field that includes edit checks for data integrity.

Management Response:

Concur. Management will work with Clerk’s Technology and BTS to review the logic for posting copy request fees to the Clerk’s Accounting System ledger accounts to ensure the data integrity of the system.
DIVISION OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
KEN BURKE, CPA
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND COMPTROLLER
PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

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