

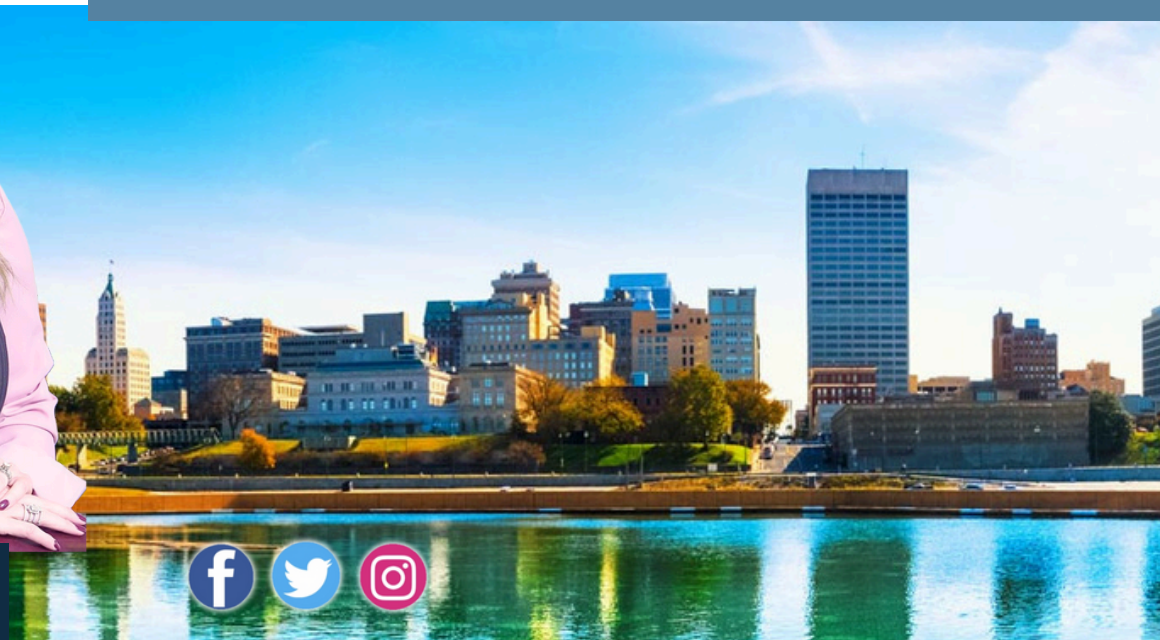


CRIMINAL COURT CLERK'S OFFICE

COMMUNICATION

HEIDI KUHN, CLERK

MAY 2024



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CLERK'S CORNER -

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, an opportune time to discuss mental health and criminal justice issues. The increasing number of individuals with mental health illness in the criminal justice system has enormous fiscal, health and human costs. Consideration must be given to divert individuals with mental health conditions away from jails and prisons and towards more appropriate and culturally competent community-based mental health care.

We must, as a community, support those who need services, we need law enforcement, public defenders, prosecutors, mental health professionals, advocates, court personnel, legislators, and others in the criminal justice system to come together to create a system that will improve outcomes for all.

First and foremost, we must attempt to eliminate the stigma associated with mental health illness. People avoid or delay seeking treatment due to concerns about being treated differently that's because stigmas, prejudice and discrimination against people with mental illness is still very much a problem. The rate of mental illness among criminal defendants has risen along with the skyrocketing rate of incarceration in the U.S. and unfortunately since untreated mental illness is more common among people of low socioeconomic status, who are also more likely to be charged with committing a violent act.

People with a mental illness are three times more likely than the general population to interact with police and are more likely to be arrested, according to a report in Health & Justice. Efforts to reduce the prison population depends on innovative programs that replace punishment by incarceration with policies that address the socioeconomic and health-related causes of crime. The high number of people with mental illness in prisons and jails is a result of our failure to provide mental health services to populations in communities of greatest risk. We must develop an approach to community health that emphasizes prevention and access to treatment which can improve people's lives and make our communities stronger and more resilient. Change starts with you.

New Employees

Welcome! The Criminal Court Clerk's Office is pleased to welcome the following new employees:



We are so excited to have you join our team!

**Erika Jones, Principal Court Clerk (left)
Christen Cooper, Deputy Court Clerk II (center)
LaTiffany Parks, Deputy Court Clerk II (right)**

Retirement Celebration

Ms. Cassandra Horton started working with the Shelby County Criminal Court Clerk's office in November 2003 as a Deputy Court Clerk, and she is currently Supervisor B in the customer service department.

Prior to Criminal Court, Ms. Horton was employed with the General Sessions Court.



In her retirement, Ms. Horton is looking to rest more. She enjoys spending hours in her cozy kitchen, mixing ingredients together to create tasty desserts for herself and family. When she is not in the kitchen, she enjoys being curled up in a comfortable armchair reading a novel. Ms. Horton is also looking forward to traveling internationally to see other places and to explore new cultures. Happy travels, Ms. Horton. After 20 years in the office, you have left your mark and we will certainly miss you!

Open Records Request Forms



If you need to submit an open records request to the Criminal Court Clerk's Office, you can now access the form on our website.

For your convenience, we have placed the form in several sections of the website.

Go to <https://www.criminalcourtclerkkuhn.com/> and you can find the open records request form on the main page under the Quick Links section, under the Resources tab, as well as on the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) tab.

If you have any questions, you can call the Criminal Court Clerk's Office at: 901-222-3200.

Denim Day

To honor Denim Day, which raises awareness about sexual violence, the Criminal Court Clerk's Office, along with millions of people around the world, dressed in denim on Wednesday, April 24th, to say NO to sexual violence.

Denim Day is a campaign on a Wednesday in April in honor of Sexual Assault Awareness Month. The campaign began after a 1999 ruling by the Italian Supreme Court where a rape conviction was overturned because the justices felt that since the victim was wearing tight jeans, she must have helped the person who raped her remove her jeans, thereby implying consent. The following day, the women in the Italian Parliament came to work wearing jeans in solidarity with the victim.

The organization Peace Over Violence developed the Denim Day campaign in response to this case and the activism surrounding it. Since then, what started as a local campaign to bring awareness to victim-blaming and destructive myths that surround sexual violence has grown into a movement.



SAY NO TO SEXUAL ABUSE



Gloria Redick



Ms. Gloria Redick started working with the Criminal Court Clerk's Office on November 17, 2004, as a Deputy Court Clerk. She is currently the Supervisor B in the mittimus department.

Outside of work, Ms. Gloria finds joy in interior decorating and fashion, where she can tap into her creative process. Ms. Gloria cherishes moments spent with her five grandchildren. She enjoys watching their faces light up with excitement on holidays, knowing that these specific moments will linger in their hearts for years to come.

For Ms. Gloria, a perfect day involves unwinding at home while listening to blues or country music with a refreshing beverage. Homemade oatmeal cookies are her comfort food, while her favorite place to travel is the coastal city of Galveston, Texas. This is one of her favorites places to relax and enjoy the beautiful scenery.



Civic Engagement

Central High School recently hosted Clerk Kuhn as a guest speaker in their U. S. Government class as part of their civic engagement series.



She spoke to the high school seniors about actively engaging in the civics process, learning about the various ways to make sure their voices are heard, about becoming informed voters, and advocating for change in our community.



Clerk Kuhn's message was well received, and the students were excited to see their U.S. Government lessons in practice.

Black Maternal Health Week



The Criminal Court Clerk's Office and Shelby County Government dressed in yellow to show support for Black Maternal Health Week.

Black Maternal Health Week, April 11 – 17, 2024, is an opportunity to raise awareness and take action to improve the health of Black mothers.

Research and data show that there are racial and ethnic disparities in death rates.

Black and American Indian/Alaska Native women are at least two to four times as likely to die from pregnancy-related causes as non-Hispanic white women.



To make sure every mother and baby has a fair and just opportunity to be healthy, the Health Resources & Services Administration works to support Black women in receiving the care that they need. For more information, go to:

BLACK MATERNAL
HEALTH



**The Shelby County
Criminal Court Clerk's Office**

CONGRATULATES

REBEKKA TERRELL

ON RECEIVING

THIS DISTINGUISHED AWARD

Memphis Business Journal's

40 Under 40 Award



Well Done, Chief Terrell!



BLOCK PARTY RESOURCE FAIR



The Criminal Court staff provided expungement information to those in attendance, empowering individuals with the knowledge to navigate their legal paths toward a brighter future.

April is Second Chance Month and the Criminal Court Clerk's Office teamed up with the Shelby County Office of Re-Entry at their Block Party Resource Fair.

There were also various agencies on-site that offered employment opportunities for the attendees.



MEET AN ADMINISTRATOR – Rebekka Freeman Terrell

You may know Rebekka Freeman Terrell as the Chief Administrative Officer of the Shelby County Criminal Court Clerk’s Office. She earned her bachelor’s degree in communications from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville. GO VOLS! She then earned her law degree at the University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law. GO TIGERS!

Living the VOLunteer spirit, Rebekka enjoys giving back and volunteering her time. She actively volunteers with various local organizations such as Shelby County Youth Court, Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midsouth, and the Junior League of Memphis, among others. She is also on the board of directors for the Memphis Child Advocacy Center and the board of directors for the local chapter of the National Black Prosecutors’ Association. 

In her quiet time, she likes to go on hikes and read, and she is a sucker for a good patio when the weather is nice. She also likes to travel the world with her family and friends.

Of all the things she has going on, Rebekka is most passionate about her family. Rebekka and her husband have a 15-year-old son who is learning to drive. Prayers up!! The Terrells live in a house divided since her husband and son are the ultimate Memphis Tigers fans. Rebekka loves to cheer on the Memphis Tigers unless they are playing her VOLS!

