A DAY IN THE LIFE - TRIAL CLERK

You've seen our friendly faces at the front counters, spoken with helpful individuals on the phone, visited our website, and perhaps watched a few court dramas on TV. But do you know what our deputy clerks really do at the Clerk's Office? Here we provide a behind-the-scenes look at one of our most versatile positions, a Trial Clerk.
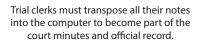
CLAIRE PALAFOX, Trial Clerk

Every trial clerk must wear this signature black blazer. Claire says you'll always find pens tucked in the pocket, to take notes at a moment's notice.
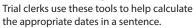
These little yellow tags are used to label evidence.

These scanners and status cards are critical to establish if court is in session, recess, or adjourned.

Trial clerks must transpose all their notes into the computer to become part of the court minutes and official record.

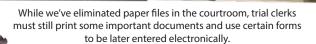Trial clerks use these tools to help calculate the appropriate dates in a sentence.

Pens, pencils, highlighters, and staples are vital to their notetaking role. Claire emphasizes how important the white out is and how much regularly gets used!

While we've eliminated paper files in the courtroom, trial clerks must still print some important documents and use certain forms to be later entered electronically.

" We do so much more than just swear people in and take evidence. Behind that computer, our hands and our minds are moving a mile a minute. It's somebody's life you're dealing with, so you have to get it right. I always thought trial clerks were a different breed of clerk. We are such multi-taskers, it's hard to pinpoint one specific task that we do. Our first priority is to keep the record. Each case gets handled – we jot down what happens in court. We take evidence, we take pleas, we do fingerprints. We do everything that has to do with the case. We deal with not only coworkers at the Clerk's Office, but the Judges, the Judicial Assistants, the deputies, the defendants, the attorneys, the state, the Public Defenders. We wear so many hats all at one time, so it could be overwhelming for somebody looking from the outside in. But once you're in that seat and you learn it, it truly is a remarkable experience. You see a trial clerk who has been here for 20+ years, and when she's sitting there, she's listening, she's writing, she's computing, she's doing everything all at one time. And you have to do it with accuracy, in a minimal timeframe. It's incredible. "

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