



PRESS RELEASE

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El Paso County Clerk Earns Best Practices Award

El Paso County's collaborative initiative limits filing of fraudulent documents

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

After the El Paso County Clerk's Official Public Records Department noticed an increase in the number of fraudulent liens and fraudulent property records filed with the county, county offices collaborated with state and federal law enforcement to prevent filings.

The Texas Association of Counties (TAC) has awarded El Paso's County Clerk a 2016 County Best Practices Award in recognition of this innovative program.

The filings were attributed to "sovereign citizens," individuals who believe that federal, state, and local governments operate illegally. The fraudulent liens filed with the county were made as a form of threat and harassment.

A collaborative effort between the County Clerk's Office, County Attorney's Office, state and federal law enforcement, and a designated state district court created a systemic solution that addressed such sovereign filings. The County Clerk may not reject offered documents without cause, so the county established a process to provisionally receive the offer and ask the filer to return in 10 days. During that time, experienced senior staff and the County Attorney review the document to confirm its validity.

"These records are at the foundation of an orderly society, and this program maintains that order so vital to our way of life," said TAC Executive Director Gene Terry. "We hope this award will inspire other counties to follow suit with their own initiatives."

El Paso County was one of more than 15 counties across Texas selected by TAC to receive a Best Practices Award.

The TAC County Best Practices Awards Program recognizes county innovation, inspires county leaders to develop improved programs, and creates an avenue for promoting replicable and proven solutions to common county concerns.

TAC works to unite Texas counties in search of solutions for challenges faced by all counties and provides services to support county officials in the vital work they do for their local communities.

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