



The Pen

Pinellas County Human Resources

Pinellas Employees Newsletter

October 2022 • Vol. 50 No. 10

Annual Enrollment for 2023 Benefits is Coming November 1

Annual Enrollment for 2023 benefits for **employees** starts Tuesday, November 1 and ends Tuesday, November 15.

All employees, including new hires and those declining coverage, must enroll in OPUS by November 15. Employees who “opt out” because they have other medical coverage must select Opt Out in OPUS and complete an [Opt Out Affidavit](#).

Why do all employees have to enroll in OPUS?

Annual Enrollment is your opportunity to review your benefits options and make selections for yourself and your family. The selections you make during Annual Enrollment are effective January 1, 2023. Your selections will remain in effect for calendar year 2023 unless you have a qualifying event such as a marriage, divorce, birth of a child, etc.

OPUS is also where you indicate if you are a tobacco user. **Failure to complete the Annual Enrollment process or to attest in OPUS will result in a \$500 annual tobacco premium.** View [Tobacco Cessation Program options](#).

Highlights

- **Dental plans** – We are introducing two new PPO plans from Cigna in addition to the HMO plan.
- **Medical plans** – Choose from the same two Cigna plans with no changes other than some increases in the HSA deductibles and employer contributions. See the [new premium rates](#).
- **Voluntary benefits expansion** – We are offering [Legal Assistance and Identity Theft options](#) in addition to the existing plans for [Critical Illness, Accident, and Hospital](#).
- **Benefits partners** – We are using the same partners for medical, dental, prescription, life insurance, and Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA).

Dental Plan Enhancements

Dental PPO

- Increased annual coverage from \$1,500 to \$2,000 maximum.
- 100% coverage for preventive care including two cleanings and two exams per year.
- **PPO Basic Plan** if orthodontia coverage is not needed.

This Annual Enrollment information is for employees. Retirees: Watch your mailbox for your information or see [Retiree Annual Enrollment](#).



Annual Enrollment for 2023 Benefits

Enroll in OPUS from November 1 to 15, 2022

We Can Help

- Visit the [Annual Enrollment website](#) which will be updated with new information as it becomes available.
- Register for a [virtual or in-person information session](#). Choose from day, evening, and weekend times. Spouses and domestic partners are welcome.
- Call **Cigna’s Pre-Enrollment Line at (800) 862-3557** to get help with looking up providers and answers to your questions about the medical and dental plans.
- Call the **Enrollment Assistance Line at (855) 474-3858** from November 1 to 15, between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. to ask questions about Annual Enrollment including the new dental plans and voluntary benefits.
- Call the **Benefits team at (727) 464-3367, option 1** from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. every weekday or request a one-on-one appointment (virtual or in-person).
- See your home mailer for important information.

- **PPO with Orthodontia Plan** with orthodontia coverage at 50% after the deductible and a separate \$1,500 lifetime maximum coverage.
- You can see any dentist in or out of network, including specialists such as pediatric, periodontic, and oral surgeon.

Dental HMO

- The HMO plan stays the same in 2023 except that dependent eligibility is expanded from age 24 to 25 to align with the PPO plans.
- Specialists are excluded on the HMO plan; however, children up to age 13 can see an in-network pediatric dentist.

For details, see [page 4](#) for a Dental Plans Comparison Chart and visit the [2023 Dental Plans FAQs](#).

continued on [page 2](#)



In this issue, we will be highlighting through pictures and stories the tremendous response from Pinellas County to Hurricane Ian. *Story begins on [page 5](#).*

Medical Plans Update

- The new premiums reflect the rising cost of healthcare. Your employer (Appointing Authority) continues to pay the same majority of the cost share as in previous years.
- The same two medical plans from Cigna will be offered. There are no changes to the Open Access Plus plan. The only changes to the Choice Fund Open Access Plus HSA plan are revised deductibles and contributions. Pinellas County increased the employer contribution for single coverage to \$500.

Annual Enrollment 2023 Information Sessions

In-Person Information Sessions

Use the same link to register for any session listed below:
[Register for In-Person Information Sessions.](#)

- **Tuesday, November 1** (3:30 to 5:00 pm)
Annex, 400 S Ft Harrison, Room 429, Clearwater
- **Wednesday, November 2** (8:00 to 9:30 am)
Public Works, 22211 U.S. Hwy. 19 N., Room A230, Clearwater
- **Friday, November 4** (8:00 to 9:30 am)
Communications, 333 Chestnut Street, Palm Room, Clearwater
- **Monday, November 7** (3:30 to 5:00 pm)
Communications, 333 Chestnut Street, Palm Room, Clearwater
- **Tuesday, November 8** (8:00 to 9:30 am)
Communications, 333 Chestnut Street, Palm Room, Clearwater
- **Wednesday, November 9** (2:00 to 3:30 pm)
Annex, 400 S Ft Harrison, Room 429, Clearwater

Virtual Information Sessions

- **Wednesday, November 2**
2:00 to 3:30 pm ([Register](#))
- **Thursday, November 3**
11:30 am to 1:00 pm ([Register](#))
6:30 to 8:00 pm ([Register](#))
- **Tuesday, November 8**
2:00 to 3:30 pm ([Register](#))
- **Wednesday, November 9**
8:30 to 10:00 am ([Register](#))

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From Kimberly Crum, HR Director



Kimberly R. Crum
Director of Human Resources

I write this with enormous gratitude for our community having minimal impact from Hurricane Ian and with thoughts for our colleagues in Southwest Florida. I spent several days with many of our employees in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) participating in our response along with many employees in the field. I sit in awe of our UPS employees from all Appointing Authorities and their commitment to preparing their families and responding to our community.

Our Human Resources team was activated in the EOC in various roles including ESF-15 (Volunteers and Donations), Policy Group, Employee Emergency Information Line and Communication Liaison.

To help employees prepare, we sent an email with tips on how to best get ready, set up a website and opened the Employee Emergency Information Line. Additionally, we offered information on the Employee Assistance Hotline, as well as assisted staff at the EOC and 9-1-1 Regional Center by providing counseling service through our onsite EAP representative.

Determining that we had 59 employees who lived in severely impacted areas, HR staff called each employee ahead of the storm's landfall to ensure their safety. All were well, and appreciative of the call.

November 1 is just around the corner, which means Annual Enrollment is quickly approaching. We are so pleased to announce the 2023 benefits updates.

Last year we completed a Benefits Valuation Study and reported our findings. When the subsidy that the County provides for each of our benefits was taken into account, it was determined that we were #1 in employer-provided value compared to 12 public entities in West Central Florida.

However, the survey also revealed that our dental package wasn't up to par. We are proud to make our benefits package even stronger in 2023 with expanded dental plans and voluntary benefits options, including Identity Theft Protection and Legal Assistance. Be sure to attend an in-person or a virtual session to hear all about these improvements.

Recently, I've had the opportunity to attend several employee meetings. Whether alongside the County Administrator at Employee Forums, with an EAC Representative, or facilitating the first module of our Supervisor Bootcamp: Leadership Essentials Program, I would like to thank everyone for their gracious invitations and thank our employees for their acknowledgement of our teams' efforts, for your thoughtful questions, and your ideas on how we can serve you even better.

Colors of Pinellas The 2022 Colors of Pinellas Virtual Art Show

Thank you to the over 200 participating artists who have registered and sent in over 220 images to be admired. In early November, you will have an opportunity to vote for your favorite in the People's Choice Awards. Watch for an email from Employee Communications. Official judging also takes place then and the winners will be announced on November 14.

Get Your W-2 Electronically Instead of By Mail

Do you want to get your W-2 as quickly as possible? Do you like conserving resources? Do you value security around your W-2 statement?



If you answered yes, then opting in for electronic W-2 statements instead of getting a paper copy in the mail is a good option for you.

This format is approved by the IRS and offers convenient 24-hour availability, early access, security (no chance of your W-2 being lost or stolen), and environmental savings by eliminating the need to print and mail a paper form.

If you opt-in for an electronic version and change your mind later, you can easily change your preference. If you prefer a mailed copy, no action is needed. Your W-2 form will be mailed to your home address as listed in OPUS Employee Self Service.

Visit [Electronic W-2 Opt In](#) for more information and view the [Electronic W-2 Screenshots Guide](#) for easy step-by-step instructions to opt-in.



Q. I heard benefits premiums are going up in 2023— will that wipe out the general increase I got?

A. There are new premiums in 2023 that reflect the rising cost of healthcare. The increases vary based on coverage, but the totals will be much lower than the general increase. For example, an employee with single coverage will be paying an additional \$17.94 per year for medical coverage in 2023 and an additional \$34.52 per year for the Dental PPO Basic Plan. The average general increase amount for employees is \$3,023 in annual dollars. For more information, see [Annual Enrollment for Benefits and General Increase](#). Also the [2023 Retention Supplement](#) will provide up to \$1,200 to eligible employees.

Q. Is the County still offering an incentive for referring a new hire?

A. We now offer a [\\$1,000 referral incentive](#) paid in two increments of \$500. The first \$500 will be awarded once the referred individual has completed 90 days of service. The second \$500 will be paid out once the referred individual has completed one year of service with the same Appointing Authority that they were hired by.

YOUR TOTAL REWARDS

Health • Wellness • Retirement • Compensation

Voluntary Benefits

New voluntary benefits are being offered for Legal Assistance and Identity Theft. We will continue to offer Critical Illness, Accident, and Hospital voluntary benefits plans. Our goal is to provide a variety of options to cover our employees' differing needs. The benefits are 100% employee-paid. For more information, see [2023 New Voluntary Benefits Plans](#).

Don't Wait — Get Your Biometric Screening Now!

Looking to save \$500 on your medical premium in 2023? Don't delay! The deadline for completing both the biometric screening and the health assessment is December 20, 2022.



Employees who complete an annual biometric screening and health assessment earn a preferred health plan premium, which will save \$500 in the upcoming year.

Before you go, make sure to familiarize yourself with the two options available (Quest or Physicians Results Form), and the steps for the option that suits you best.

For more information, visit [Biometric Screening & Health Assessment](#). **Need to confirm that you completed both steps?** Use the [Completion Help Guide](#).

2022 Benefits Partners

DENTAL

Cigna
(800) 862-3557
www.myCigna.com

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

Cigna
(800) 862-3557
www.myCigna.com

FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT (FSA) TASC

(800) 422-4661
www.TASConline.com

HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNT (HSA) HSA Bank

(800) 357-6246
www.HSABank.com

LIFE INSURANCE
Securian Financial
www.securian.com

MEDICAL/BEHAVIORAL/MENTAL HEALTH
Cigna

(800) 862-3557
www.myCigna.com

PRESCRIPTION
Express Scripts
(866) 544-9221
www.express-scripts.com

VISION
EyeMed
(866) 939-3633
www.EyeMed.com

VOLUNTARY BENEFITS
Aflac
(800) 433-3036
www.Aflac.com

Take Care of Yourself



In the [October To Your Health newsletter](#), you will find:

- October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- Wellness Incentive Payout: September 30 Paycheck
- Open Up! It's National Dental Hygiene Month
- Debunking BMI
- Maintain Campaign Registration Begins October 31

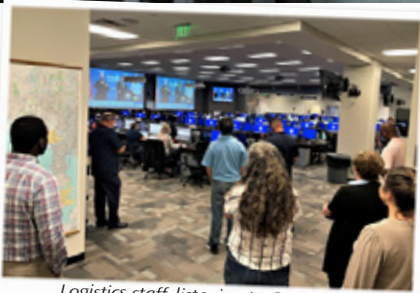
2023 Dental Plan Comparison Chart

Item	Cigna HMO	Cigna Basic PPO	Cigna PPO with Orthodontia
Payroll deduction	No payroll deduction	Payroll deduction required (see above)	Payroll deduction required (see above)
Benefits	Copayments apply based on the procedure and the established fee schedule	Preventive Care – 100% Basic Restorative – 80% Major Restorative – 50%	Preventive Care – 100% Basic Restorative – 80% Major Restorative – 50%
Cleanings and Exams	2 cleanings and up to 4 exams per year	2 cleanings and up to 2 exams per year	2 cleanings and up to 2 exams per year
Deductible (Individual / Family)	Not applicable	\$50 / \$150	\$50 / \$150
Maximum	No maximum annual benefit	Maximum plan year benefit of \$2,000	Maximum plan year benefit of \$2,000
Network	Must choose an in-network dentist	Use any provider, but in-network is recommended for cost savings	Use any provider, but in-network is recommended for cost savings
Specialists	Not covered, unless using an in-network pediatric dentist for children up to age 13	Use any specialist, but in-network is recommended for cost savings	Use any specialist, but in-network is recommended for cost savings
Orthodontics	Not included	Not included	Covered at 50% for children and adults (\$1,500 separate lifetime maximum)
Eligibility for Children	Through the end of the calendar year in which they reach age 25	Through the end of the calendar year in which they reach age 25	Through the end of the calendar year in which they reach age 25

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Response to Hurricane Ian



Logistics staff listening to Governor Ron DeSantis' Hurricane Ian briefing.



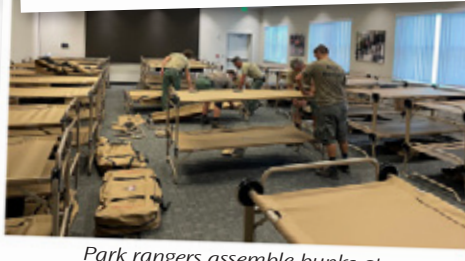
Tuesday, September 27, morning briefing at the EOC.



County Technician lowering flood control at Lake Seminole.



Ryan Brinson delivering MRE meals.



Park rangers assemble bunks at the EOC.



Morning briefing during Hurricane Ian at the EOC.



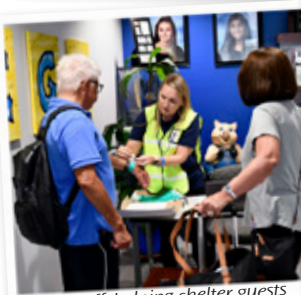
Staff at a Pinellas County shelter ready to help.



Staff at a Pinellas County shelter prepared and ready to go.



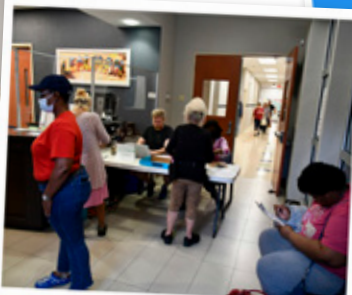
Logistics staff at the EOC.



Staff helping shelter guests check-in before the storm.



Shelter staff prepping meals.



Staff helping shelter guests check-in before the storm.



SAT Runner in Hardee County to establish communications.

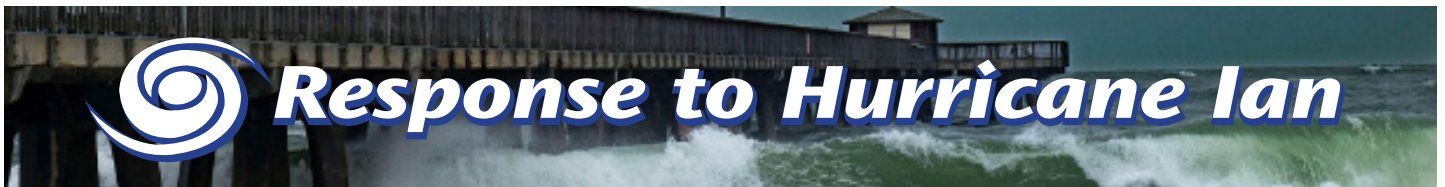


Logistics staff at the EOC.



Support staff at the EOC.

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Pinellas County Clerk's Office Staff Issue Marriage License Ahead of Hurricane Ian

Clerk's Staff Extend Office Hours for Out-of-State Couple

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Pinellas County Clerk's Office staff went above and beyond to make one couple's wedding dreams come true. Christopher Rodgers and Sarah Bermudez, an out-of-state couple who are traveling missionaries from Dallas, Texas found themselves in desperate need of a marriage license for their upcoming wedding. Due to the unexpected path of

Hurricane Ian, the Clerk's Office closed its doors to the public leaving them with the heartbreaking thought of postponing their wedding. They reached out to their local pastor for help, Father Curtis Carro of St. Raphael Catholic Church, who then contacted the Clerk's Office to call in a favor for the couple.

"Although we were closed, I reached out to our staff to see if they'd be willing to facilitate issuing the marriage license," said Ken Burke, Pinellas County Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller.

Senior Records Specialist, Wendy Isaacs, and Ed Sheehy, Assistant Manager of the Recording Services Department, opened the doors to the couple to provide them with a marriage license the day before Hurricane Ian arrived. The couple had already applied for their license online, so the entire process took about 20 minutes once they provided their required documents in person. Because of their efforts, the couple was able to move forward with their planned ceremony.

Father Marvin Capuchin officiated the ceremony in front

of the couple's close friends and family.

"I've performed two marriage ceremonies outside the office with Ken's approval, but I've never had to come in when we were closed before this. It was good that we could help them make the day feel special," said Isaacs.

Ed Sheehy has worked for the Clerk's Office for 18 years and says he's never encountered a situation like this before. "To be able to come and assist and have someone's wedding go forward because of the care and concern that you have for their predicament, it's an amazing feeling, it really warms your heart. To see how much the job that we do means to someone, it's amazing," Sheehy said.

The Recording Services Department offers marriage licenses, marriage ceremonies, and photo services at several branch locations.

"I was sitting there with Ed and Wendy and at that moment it was a huge blessing and a lot of gratitude for the people in our community and how we band together to help each other out," said Bermudez.

"Wendy and Ed displayed true loyalty and dedication to our work and the office by making this happen for the couple," said Bill Burgess, Senior Manager of Recording Services. "They truly represent the Clerk's core values of being committed to excellent customer service."

For more information on obtaining marriage licenses, visit the [Clerk's website](#) or call the office at (727) 464-7000.



Shelter Guest Finds Comfort in New Friends

By Gwynne Boccia, Public Works



We had a resident arrive at the shelter, having been mandatory evacuated. She was extremely scared and had a panic attack at the doorway. A few of our staff spoke to her and calmed her down. She had not been out of her house nor had any

human contact since the start of the COVID pandemic. She was scared, wearing a mask, and clinging to the doorway. Her concerns were addressed, and we placed her in a room with two other women. The next day she

seemed like a different person! She was smiling, not wearing a mask, and had made some new friends. We were so happy to see her come out of her shell and blossom because of all our efforts and concern. When she checked out, she expressed to us her gratitude and heartfelt thanks. She said that one woman in her room gave her a hug on her first night, and that was the first human contact she had had since COVID started. Her story touched our hearts and made us realize that even though the storm did not hit Pinellas County, we were still able to help our residents and make a positive impact in their lives.



Employees From Clerk’s Office Reflect on Their Time Spent Volunteering During Hurricane Ian

Several employees from the Clerk’s Office served as volunteers at various shelters throughout Pinellas County. Please read below some of the statements from staff.

Robert Tran (Civil Court Records Department)

Shelter location: Sexton Elementary

I love the fact that I was able to help people to be as comfortable as possible at the shelter. The best part was how grateful people are to you for helping them. Everyone was saying thank you to my team and I, which made it all worth it.

Although we came from different Appointing Authorities, we came together as a team very quickly to do what we had to do in a chaotic situation. Everyone respected each other and communicated professionally, and we did not have any major issues at all. I had an awesome team.

Lane Simpson (Clerk’s Training Department)

Shelter location: Dunedin Elementary School

Volunteering for shelter duty was an amazing and humbling experience. The staff at our shelter was largely Clerk’s Office staff from multiple departments. We were so fortunate to be placed at a shelter with an incredible and giving school staff and a wonderful shelter manager. We had cafeteria staff on-site who made delicious meals and incorporated fun into the experience for the wonderful citizens we were able to serve. It was a truly inspiring experience right down to the police officers we have befriended as a result. Additionally, several of us are meeting for dinners to celebrate the bond we created in the process.

Alexandria Lugo (Court Assistance)

Shelter location: Dunedin Elementary School

Overall, I absolutely loved working in the shelter. My team and manager made this experience way more fun than I intended. Being able to help the residents that are not able to fend for themselves or have anyone to help them makes me feel better and, pulls the community closer together. I would for sure take part in this experience again.

Jenniva Hernandez (Criminal Court Records)

Shelter location: Lealman Exchange

The staff was amazing, from our Clerk’s staff to meeting others that also work for the County and even the Sheriff’s Office; it was great getting to speak and work alongside them. The people that came to seek shelter were always gracious and so polite. Volunteering opened my eyes to potential emergencies that require all hands on deck. It was a positive experience.

The Night Manager, Jennifer Wright, was outstanding. She got in there quickly, took hold of any situation, and was there working right alongside us. She was extremely polite and made everyone feel important. Aubrey Kanoski took initiative to create a system in Excel to account for staff and shelter occupants, which saved lots of time since the program was down. Ramona Schaefer from PCSO was the one to take action in extremely sensitive situations that required mediation and very well-handled communications. Overall, the staff was great. Well done everyone!

Cari Perez (North County Branch)

Shelter location: Dunedin Elementary School

It was an experience filled with blessings and it gave me a perspective of gratitude for our community and those who are in need of reassurance in a time of need. The team/ leadership from the County and the Dunedin ES staff was fantastic to work with. I am grateful for the opportunity afforded to me.

Tammy Worden-Ayars (Compliance)

Shelter location: Dunedin Elementary School

Working at the shelter and assisting the community residents in feeling comfortable, while we waited to see how Ian would impact Pinellas, was a rewarding experience. I was able to provide a listening ear for those with anxiety, help others find resources, and coordinate with the Sheriff’s Office, Fire Rescue and the school’s staff. Many of the people we interacted with brought unique perspectives on community needs and helped each of us show kindness and compassion and humor.

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Response to Hurricane Ian

St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport Hosts Hurricane Ian Supply Drive for Punta Gorda Airport

By Michele Routh, St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport

St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport (PIE) partnered with Signature Flight Support and hosted a Hurricane Ian Supply Donation Drive for Punta Gorda Airport (PGD). PGD is an airport similar to PIE serving over 1.5 million passengers on mostly Allegiant flights. PGD has 100 employees and 25 of their employees faced significant, but repairable damage to their homes. Five employees lost everything. Many in Punta Gorda still are without power. On Tuesday, October 11, the donations were delivered to PGD in a van donated by PIE's Enterprise Rental Car Agency. We appreciate the employees and community members who donated. We also greatly appreciate the media who informed the public of the donation drive and the ongoing difficulties faced in Southwest Florida. We are grateful that we are in the position to help our neighbors.



St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport Employee, Michele Routh, greeting Lisa from Countryside. Lisa had prepared to host family members during Hurricane Ian and brought all the supplies she had stocked up on to contribute to Punta Gorda Airport.

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FY23 General Pay Increase and Retention Supplement

General Increase

The Appointing Authorities and the Board of County Commissioners approved the Fiscal Year 2023 budget that includes a general increase with two components, **effective October 9, 2022:**

- An increase equivalent to **3% of the midpoint** of the associated pay range for eligible permanent and probationary classified and exempt Unified Personnel System employees.
- An additional **special adjustment of \$0.58/hour** which is \$1,206.40 for a regular employee working 40 hours per week.

Permanent and probationary classified and exempt employees hired before October 1, 2022, will receive a general increase which appeared on their **October 28 paycheck**. Appointing Authorities may elect to exclude an individual employee from the general increase as indicated in [Personnel Rule 3](#).

Concurrent with the general increase, a **3% upward adjustment to the pay plans** has been approved. View the [updated pay plans](#). This is not a pay increase, but it does increase the minimum, midpoint, and maximum of the pay grades. This upward adjustment results in a larger general increase — increasing the pay range minimum benefits new employees, while increasing the pay range maximum benefits long-tenured employees that are at the max of their range.

Maxed Out Employees:

- Employees who exceed the newly adjusted maximum for their pay grade will receive an increase that will bring their pay rate to the new maximum. The remainder of their adjustment will be awarded in a single lump sum payment on October 28, 2022.
- Employees whose hourly rate is currently at or above the newly adjusted maximum for their pay grade will receive a single lump sum payment in the October 28, 2022, paycheck.

To learn more, see [General Increase](#).

\$1,200 Retention Supplement

Our employees' dedication is what makes Pinellas County such a great place to live and work. The Appointing Authorities and the Board of County Commissioners approved a retention supplement of \$1,200 for every permanent employee of the Unified Personnel System to reward performance. In order to be awarded payment, the employee must be continuously employed during all pay periods in the evaluation periods listed below:

- Supplement 1 (\$600): October 2, 2022, to January 28, 2023
- Supplement 2 (\$600): January 29, 2023, to July 29, 2023

To learn more, see [Retention Supplement](#).

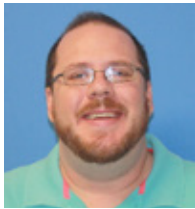
National Customer Service Appreciation Week 2022



Customer Service Week is an international celebration of the importance of customer service and of the people who serve and support customers on a daily basis. In 1992, the U.S. Congress proclaimed Customer Service Week a nationally recognized event, celebrated during the first full week in October.

We hope you enjoy these employee spotlights as part of the celebration.

Employee Spotlights



Philipp Conner

Position: Senior Application Developer

Department: Business Technology Services

How long with Pinellas County?
3 years 6 months

Have you had any other positions with Pinellas County?
I have been with the Cityworks team since I have been hired, so this has been my only position.

Describe job in 25 words or less: I support, maintain, and provide solutions for the County Enterprise Asset Management software, Cityworks, and other enterprise applications.

Best part of job: I really enjoy meeting folks from all around the County and love to learn how they all work

hard to make Pinellas a county known for serving our communities.

Most challenging part of the job: Working with a variety of technologies across many different groups and departments in an everchanging IT landscape.

Most memorable moment? My most memorable moment is most likely spending a great day with my department at the holiday parties. It is a nice time for us to relax and just be able to catch up on how each other is doing since we have last talked. This is even more important when we were working remotely during the pandemic.

What do you do in your free time? I got a new 3D printer this year, so I have been leaning how to work with that, and I love to play board games with friends.



Ashley Flaherty

Position: Residential Appraiser

Department: Property Appraiser's Office – South County

How long with Pinellas County?
7 1/2 years

Have you had any other positions with Pinellas County?
I have been at the Property Appraiser's Office for my entire County career.

Describe job in 25 words or less: I am responsible for the appraisal and valuation of residential properties for tax purposes. I am responsible for the barrier islands from Indian Rocks to Treasure Island and Pinellas Park.

Best part of job: The best part of my job is my coworkers. I am extremely lucky to work with a really great group of people. The comradery and support we give to each other is next level.

Most challenging part of the job: The most challenging part of my job is during TRIM and VAB. Keeping everything and everyone together can be overwhelming.

Most memorable moment? My most memorable moments have been when I'm able to help someone that was upset or panicking. Being able to get them an answer or to the right department to ease the stress is very rewarding.

What do you do in your free time? In my free time, I like to spend time with my husband and 2 sons. I also enjoy exercising and trying new restaurants.



Maria Kelly

Position: Secretary

Department: Forward Pinellas

How long with Pinellas County?
6 years

Have you had any other positions with Pinellas County?
No.

Describe job in 25 words or less: Performing clerical tasks on behalf of my team including coordinating calendars, emailing, preparing for meetings, capturing meeting notes, and working with the public to attend

committee meetings and public requests to provide records or educational material.

Best part of job: I work with a great group of people who appreciate me.

Most challenging part of the job: Juggling the different tasks from the different committees, which becomes easier with time.

Most memorable moment? When my team recognized the completion of my master's degree.

What do you do in your free time? Play golf, a little traveling, and I am a volunteer usher at Ruth Eckard Hall.

The Pen

[Employee Spotlights continued from page 9](#)



Britney Nuraj

Position: Tax Technician II

Department: Tax Collector's Office - Gulf to Bay

How long with Pinellas County?
3 years

Have you had any other positions with Pinellas County?
No.

Describe job in 25 words or less: As a Tax Technician II, I perform background duties, such as funds and audit, and train other customer service technicians on new ticket types.

Best part of job: The best part of my job is training others. I love when new information starts to click and clerks have an "Aha!" moment. My goal is to not only help others learn something new, but to also gain their confidence by giving words of encouragement or sharing my personal experiences. I truly find joy in developing others into their best selves and being part of their support system.

Most challenging part of the job: The most challenging part of my job is the constant change in procedures,

due to legislative changes. These changes can also make training another coworker challenging because they may have learned to process something differently than I have. But that is why it's important to be agile and roll with the punches. It is never too late to learn something new. PCTC is always evolving, which is what makes us the best place to work for!

Most memorable moment? My most memorable moment, while working here, is participating in our Leadership Development Program. For our final class, my co-worker and I had to give a presentation on teamwork. We made our presentation Harry Potter-themed and created our own version of Quidditch. Watching everyone "fly" around the office on broomsticks in search of the hidden "golden snitch" and hitting each other with beach balls was truly hysterical! It was great seeing everyone relax and have genuine fun. I highly recommend activities such as this to boost morale and collaboration.

What do you do in your free time? In my free time, I love spending my time outdoors, specifically at the beach or kayaking. I also LOVE to shop, though my husband may not always approve!

The Pen



Linda Santiago

Position: Equal Opportunity Technician

Department: Office of Human Rights

How long with Pinellas County?
1 year 2 months

Have you had any other positions with Pinellas County?
No

Describe job in 25 words or less: I interview, evaluate, and determine if a discrimination act has occurred, and process all documentation to generate the complaint and file the charge of discrimination.

Best part of job: Helping people! It is always good to know that you are making a difference in someone's life.

Most challenging part of the job: Not being able to do more.

Most memorable moment? There are so many. My favorite moments are doing outreach events. Being able to go out to our communities to answer questions and provide educational materials.

What do you do in your free time? I like to spend time with my family and volunteer in my community through the Order of the Eastern Stars Organization.



Shenita J. Cooper

Position: Customer Services Analyst

Department: Customer Services Utilities/Payment Processing Center

How long with Pinellas County?
28 years

Have you had any other positions with Pinellas County?
Previously, I was in Clerk of Court Finance for 19 years and in the Building Department for 2 years.

Describe job in 25 words or less: I provide customer service for Pinellas County Utilities walk-in customers. This can be anything from opening/closing accounts, taking payments and resolving any customer issues with their service.

Best part of job: The best part of my job is communicating and interacting with customers. I love

talking to them and assisting them with their utilities concerns and needs.

Most challenging part of the job: The challenging part of my job is dealing with difficult customers associated with services turned off, high water bills or leaks. I always turn these outcomes into more positive ones, and they leave happy.

Most memorable moment? My most memorable moment is decorating the office for holidays with co-workers and the potlucks. The customers also enjoy the decorations, as well.

What do you do in your free time? In my free time, I love to spend it with my family, especially my grandchildren and their involvement in sports. I also love to go to different stores and shop for clothes, earrings, and home décor.

Tax Collector's Offices Celebrate Customer Service Week 2022

Pinellas Tax Collector's offices observed National Customer Service Week October 10-14, celebrating both their customers and their team, who prioritize Customer-Focused Excellence both internally and externally. The week consisted of fun theme days, food, games, and team-building activities.

This is the third year participating in this nationwide event and it is a celebration of both their dedication to customer service and their customers, the citizens of Pinellas County. Originally scheduled for October 3-7, the PCTC postponed the event due to Hurricane Ian. In

addition to all the internal fun, the offices had a special "thank you" gift to hand out to customers during the week.

"I have an extremely hardworking and dedicated team that prioritizes customer service both within and outside our organization," Tax Collector Charles W. Thomas said. "It is important for me and our senior leadership team to celebrate and recognize our employees whenever we get the chance, and Customer Service Week is one aspect of that philosophy. It's also a great opportunity to celebrate our citizens, too."



Tax Collector's staff on Twin Day



All the colors of the rainbow



Playing a game of Connect 4



The staff play a friendly game of Quidditch



Prizes, prizes, and more prizes!



Enjoying lunch together



The winner of Connect 4



Dressing up for "Where Are You From?" Day



Dressing up for Character Day

The Pen

Clerk’s Office Shines a Light on Domestic Violence Survivors

The Pinellas County Clerk’s Office continues its mission to recognize Domestic Violence Awareness Month through a series of County-wide initiatives and fundraisers. This year’s theme “Shining a Light on the Cause” highlights the work to humanize survivor stories beyond statistics.

Leading with integrity, transparency, and compassion, the office partnered with CASA and Haven, two organizations providing support to domestic violence victims and survivors. Through the sale of t-shirts, a gift basket raffle, and bake sales, the Clerk’s Office raised over \$8,000 to help further the mission of raising awareness throughout Pinellas County.

A small ceremony will be held to present checks to representatives of both organizations.

The Clerk’s Office has also partnered with CASA to serve as a Justice Partner for the launch of the new Family Justice Center in Pinellas County. The Family Justice Center is the only center in the state of Florida that will provide collaborative, safe, and free wraparound services to survivors of domestic violence and their families.

“I’m immensely excited about the grand opening of the Family Justice Center. I think it’s really going to offer survivors assistance with the barriers they face when trying to navigate this often scary and confusing system,” said Maise Lauster, Community Engagement Manager for the Family Justice Center.

“Our office is committed to ensuring that victims of domestic violence are more than just a statistic. Partnering with community agencies like CASA allows us to put a human face on the work we do and that is what we strive for,” said Ken Burke, Pinellas County Clerk of the Circuit Court.

The Clerk’s Office plays a pivotal role in seeking protection for victims of domestic violence, through processing petitions for injunctions, also referred to as restraining orders. For more information and services provided to domestic violence survivors, please visit the [Clerk’s website](#) or call the Clerk’s Self-Help Center at (727) 464-7000.

The Pen



Clerk’s staff wearing purple in support of Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Clerk’s Office hosts a hot dog and bake sale fundraiser in support of CASA and Haven, two nonprofit organizations that provide resources to survivors of domestic violence.



Tax Collector's Offices Support 20th Anniversary of "End Breast Cancer" Specialty Plate

This October, Pinellas County Tax Collector Offices support National Breast Cancer Awareness Month by teaming up with the Florida Breast Cancer Foundation for the 20th anniversary of their specialty plate.



Florida Breast Cancer Foundation promotional items and specialty license plate.

Tax Collector employees will encourage customers to purchase or renew the "End Breast Cancer" specialty plate throughout October. The funds raised from the specialty plate support breast cancer education and medical research programs for Florida residents. The plate has raised over \$8 million since it launched in 2002 and celebrates its 20th anniversary this year.

Customers who switch to the plate or donate \$5 or more to this wonderful cause will also receive a reusable tote bag as a "thank you" gift. Each Wednesday in October, Tax Collector employees will wear pink Breast Cancer Foundation t-shirts to help spread awareness and spark conversations with their customers.

"We are excited to join the Florida Breast Cancer Foundation (FBCF) in celebrating and promoting the 20th anniversary of their specialty plate this year," said Pinellas County Tax Collector Charles W. Thomas. "This campaign is a great way for us to spread awareness to our community and raise funds to help end breast cancer."

According to the CDC, every two minutes a woman is diagnosed with breast cancer in the U.S. Despite medical advancements and increased awareness, breast cancer is still the most common cancer in the country as of 2022.

In addition to raising awareness, the FBCF is committed to funding innovative research for diagnosing, treating, and hopefully, one day, curing breast cancer. Find more information about the [Florida Breast Cancer Foundation](https://www.floridabreastcancer.org/).

Pinellas County Tax Collector Awarded Prestigious Honor for 11th Year

Pinellas County Tax Collector Charles W. Thomas and his finance team recently received their 11th consecutive Legacy Award from the Florida Tax Collector's Association. The Legacy Award is one of the most prestigious honors awarded to Florida tax collectors and their organizations.



Budget and Finance Deputy Tax Collector, Kimberly Williams-Tomlin (left), pictured with Pinellas County Tax Collector, Charles W. Thomas (right), and the Legacy Award.

Each year, a five-person panel (made up of Florida governmental financial executives) reviews the processes of Florida tax collector offices. The recipient of the Legacy Award meets the criteria of a clean, error-free annual audit report combined with an organizational focus on innovative technology, customer service, and keen budgeting skills.

"What an honor it is for our organization to win the Legacy Award for the 11th year in a row," said Pinellas County Tax Collector Charles W. Thomas. "Our Budget and Finance team's hard work and commitment to accuracy is what continues to earn us this award each year. I am very proud of their dedication to financial expertise and excellence. They are absolutely deserving of this recognition."

In addition to 11 consecutive years of recognition for financial accuracy, the Pinellas County Tax Collector's Office has also won multiple Governor's Sterling Awards. Find more info about their organization and its operations at the [Tax Collector's Office](https://www.pinellascounty.org/taxcollector/) or on their social media accounts – Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram – @PinellasTC.

Holiday Lights in the Gardens is Back

The Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation is proud to announce the return of its winter holiday celebration in 2022. At the 22nd Annual Holiday Lights in the Gardens, the gardens will sparkle with over one million twinkling, colorful, LED lights from Friday, November 25, 2022 through Sunday, January 1, 2023, 5:30 – 9:30 p.m. nightly.

Holiday Lights are free to enjoy, with a suggested donation of \$10 per person. St. Pete Concessions will be back on-site, offering food and beverages for purchase, and the live nightly entertainment will be sure to get you in the holiday spirit.



Board of County Commissioners Recognize Fire Professionals of the Year

On Tuesday, October 11, the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners honored the 2022 Fire Professionals of the Year. The awards are given annually to those who go above and beyond the call of duty in providing professional fire services to the community and other members of the fire services.

Honored were:

- Michael Ross, firefighter/paramedic with Palm Harbor Fire Rescue, Fire Professional of the Year. His heroic effort while off-duty saved the life of a neighbor whose car had slipped into the water while at a boat ramp.
- Calvin Hunsinger, Pinellas County Regional 9-1-1 Supervisor, Fire Dispatcher of the Year. Earlier this year, he took a call from a panicked individual as flames and smoke filled their home. He gathered the necessary information and kept the person calm as help arrived.
- The Pinellas County Technical Rescue Team, named the Special Operations Team of the Year. Made up of more than 120 members from across Pinellas County,

the team uses special equipment and techniques to perform high-risk rescues. Four fire departments are represented on the team: St. Petersburg, Pinellas Park, Largo and Clearwater.

A [Fire Professionals of the Year video](#) has been created highlighting the accomplishments of these recipients. Along with the fire awards, the Board issued proclamations recognizing Fire Prevention Week and National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Introduced were Chief Rick Graham of Lealman Fire Rescue, president of the Pinellas County Fire Chiefs Association, and four members of the Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County: Valarie D. Lee, Lisa Field, Sharon Haggans and LaShun Williams.

An estimated 291,000 new cases of invasive breast cancer and more than 51,000 cases of non-invasive cancer are diagnosed in the United States each year, with an estimated 44,000 people losing their lives. One in eight woman and one in 833 men will develop breast cancer at some point in their lives.

The Pen



Members of the Pinellas County Technical Rescue Team were awarded Special Operations Team of the Year



BCC issues National Breast Cancer Awareness Month Proclamation to (from left to right) Valarie D. Lee, Lisa Field, Sharon Haggans, and LaShun Williams from the Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County



BCC presents Fire Dispatcher of the Year Award to Calvin Hunsinger



BCC issues Fire Prevention Week Proclamation to Chief Rick Graham of Lealman Fire Rescue and President of the Pinellas County Fire Chiefs Association



BCC presents Fire Professional of the Year Award to Michael Ross

Park Ranger Wins Second Place in Tampa Bay Times Essay Contest



Congratulations to Randy Goggin, a Park Ranger 2 at [Brooker Creek Preserve](#), for coming in second place in an essay contest held by the *Tampa Bay Times*. You can read a copy of his essay about his experience at Brooker Creek Preserve below.

A Bobcat Hunting at a Preserve in Central Florida

Twilight cast its glow across the preserve. An armadillo was muscling its way through the understory of the scrub forest behind me. I felt the stillness of evening creeping in, as I lingered on the last stretch of road leading out - everyone gone, the gates now closed. I took in the sheer beauty: the golden grasses, St. John's Worts, clumps of palmetto, an assortment of eudicot blooms. A single pawpaw stood tall beside the apron of a gopher tortoise burrow about thirty feet out, its white flowers glowing like paper lanterns in the slanted light - the slash pines now silhouettes to the west.

A prescribed fire had opened up the landscape here, maybe three or four years back. The burn had left a mosaic of distinct upland habitats - meadows, flatwoods, shaded oak hammocks. The slash pines were heat-scarred monuments of fire-adapted life. It was like looking back in time to when lightning started fires, and the flames shaped and replenished the land - no houses, roadways, or 911 calls to hinder the natural flow of things.

A scream lifted my attention to the sky - a turkey arcing upwards like a beachball kicked from the Earth, then plummeting down again with gravitational force. It smashed into the meadow, sprinting my way. I didn't move from my place in front of my car. Again, it screamed, flapping hard off the ground, gliding, then crash-landing into a slide across the asphalt. My eyes

instinctively scanned the meadow in search of its pursuer. A single cat head emerged above the cover of grasses, its distinct, tufted ears aimed forward to listen for its prey. *Lynx rufus floridanus*. Its head disappeared, resurfacing again about six feet closer to the road.

The turkey crashed off through the scrub in the opposite direction. Within seconds the bobcat was crossing too, moving wraith-like across the road, then out into the oaks and crowded saplings. There was another struggle down in the cypress swamp - then one last, wild scream. The turkey was flying up over the tops of the pond cypress trees - its trajectory taking it out toward the cow pastures across the highway. I imagined it out there by the Duke Energy powerline towers, breathing hard and watching the distant tree line.

A sharp, two-syllable whistle broke the silence, an avian call that reverberated through the air. A bobwhite quail, *Colinus virginianus*. The bobcat was right there on the shoulder of the road, its posture one of rapt attention - listening. I could see its lust for a meal in how it stretched its neck upward - awake for the night and ready to kill. When it saw me, it stared - indecision in its *Felidae* eyes. I stared back, not daring to move. Then it was running, keeping close to the ground. It slipped past a clump of saw palmetto and disappeared back out into a darker meadow - becoming one again with the land.

The Pen

New Pinellas.gov Website and @pinellas.gov Emails Launch



Congratulations to all of the staff who worked so hard to complete our new, mobile-friendly website, Pinellas.gov. The site has been online since Saturday, October 22. Problems so far have been minimal. Staff continue to monitor the traffic, add

redirect links and make other adjustments, as planned.

On Wednesday, October 26, Business Technology Services (BTS) made @Pinellas.gov the primary email address for departments that use @pinellascounty.org (with the exception of Forward Pinellas). Our old email addresses will still work - we're just adding @Pinellas.gov and making it the main "reply-to" and "from" address. Please see your email for information from the Communications Department about how to update your email signature.

County's Solid Waste Disposal Complex Offers Free Tours

Have you ever wondered what happens to your garbage when you throw it away? Are you interested in learning about the Department of Solid Waste's vision of zero waste to landfill by 2050 and why it's important that we create less waste?

This family-friendly, 90-minute tour provides an overview of Pinellas County's integrated solid waste management system and includes a classroom and driving presentation of the Solid Waste Disposal Complex. Participants will see the Waste-to-Energy Facility, landfill, and more.

Tours are available for County department work sections, third through 12th grade school students, college and university students, technical and industry groups, businesses, and professional and homeowner's organizations. Email recycle@pinellascounty.org or call (727) 464-7500 to request a tour.



Department of Solid Waste Outreach Team: Leslie Caplin, Ashley Wyland, Emily LeMay, Jasmine Scott, and Stephanie Watson

Your Learning Opportunities

Learn Today. Be Ready for Tomorrow.

Pinellas County supports a learning culture for all employees. For more information, visit [Organizational & Talent Development](#) or call the team at 464-3367, option 2.

Virtual Learning: Opening the Door to Robust Growth Opportunities

We all know the story of 2020. Covid hit and the world was forced to venture into the hybrid workspace. Prior to this, many people sought out face-to-face learning opportunities to move towards their learning goals. Given the greater need for virtual communication amid the past few years, along with a renewed emphasis across industries on upskilling and reskilling, it's safe to say the benefits of online learning and online classes have become much clearer to working adults. We know that we face an increasingly digitized workforce. Learning in this digital environment can help us feel more comfortable with developing technical skills, as well. Immersing ourselves in virtual learning opportunities is beneficial as it provides flexibility and versatility. Clearing the schedule and arriving at face-to-face classes can prove difficult at times, so the ability to sign onto a virtual platform is an exciting opportunity for many as it helps create more work/life balance. When participating fully in a virtual learning class by having your camera on and engaging in meaningful discourse, one may also find an increase in learning retention and application of new skills directly onto the job. Collaboratively communicating with groups of employees that you never have had a chance to engage in discourse with prior is also a proven benefit as it helps build relationships.

Asynchronous options are another avenue to explore, as well. This is where a portal, such as ULearnIT, is used to engage at one's own pace, in a variety of learning material such as videos, articles, and even audio books. ULearnIT has every topic you could imagine. From interviewing techniques to advanced leadership skills, it is recommended to explore ULearnIT and see all that it has to offer to enhance your growth.

If your interest is peaked in virtual learning, we encourage you to review the upcoming 2022 virtual options below and stay tuned for even more exciting opportunities to come in 2023.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to your Organizational & Talent Development team with any questions about upcoming opportunities or how to access your ULearnIT portal.

Accountability That Works

- Tuesday, November 1 (8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)

Goal Setting Works

- Wednesday, November 2 (8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)

Interviewing For Success

- Thursday, November 3 (8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)

Time Management: Increase Productivity & Improve Results

- Tuesday, November 15 (8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)

Strategic Performance Management 101

- Friday, November 18 (9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.)

Tech Savvy

- Wednesday, November 30 (8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)

Cultivating a Model Of Customer Service Excellence

- Thursday, December 1 (8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)

Microsoft Word 2016 Core

- Thursday, December 8 (8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)

Ensures Accountability

- Tuesday, December 13 (8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)

Great American Teach-In, November 16

Attention BCC Employees

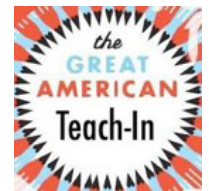
As the Great American Teach-In quickly approaches, we highly encourage our employees to consider participating in this important event.

Employee participation in the Great American Teach-In, while on County time, will return to in-person this year.

As with past years, employees will be responsible for coordinating their participation with the Pinellas County public school of their choice, and responsible for seeking approval to participate from their supervisor, to ensure appropriate coverage. Please coordinate with your supervisor by November 11.

Check out the [memo from County Administrator Barry Burton](#) (internal link) for more details.

For any questions related to the Great American Teach-In, please contact workforcerelationscommunication@pinellascounty.org.



Save the Date: Business Writing

November 16, Virtual Session, 8:30 a.m. – Noon

Effective business writing has never been as important as it is today. Almost all business communication is done through writing, yet many struggle to communicate clearly and succinctly. All individuals benefit from strong business writing. By following some simple steps and understanding your audience, anyone can boost their business writing abilities.

Don't Be Caught Underwater When Purchasing a Used Vehicle

Hurricane Ian has caused devastating damage to parts of Florida, destroying homes, businesses, and vehicles. As Floridians start to recover from the storm, what happens to the thousands of cars and trucks that were caught in rising waters? While some vehicles will be considered a total loss by insurance companies, others will find their way into the used car market — with no disclosure of the damage. The vehicles will be cleaned up and resold to buyers who are unaware of the vehicle's history — even vehicles with minor damage, which could lead to major repair bills down the road for unsuspecting buyers. Consumers should be aware that the risk of buying a water-damaged vehicle is not limited to the areas where the flooding occurred. Many of the damaged vehicles are transported and sold in states far away, where buyers may be less likely to suspect flood damage. Here are some steps you can take to help spot potentially flooded vehicles:

- Any time you are purchasing a used vehicle, it is always recommended to have a reputable and licensed mechanic check it out. The money you pay for an inspection could save you thousands of dollars in repairs later.
- Ask for the title of the vehicle and a detailed vehicle history report. The history report should be able to list any accidents or natural disasters that the vehicle

was involved in. Keep in mind, uninsured vehicles or incidents not reported to an insurance company may not show on the report.

- Use your senses. Look and smell for telltale signs of water damage: rust, dried mud/sand/salt deposits, water marks, mold/mildew, replaced carpet or upholstery that doesn't match or fits loosely, fading or stains.
- AS-IS means just that. You are purchasing the vehicle in its current condition, despite oral statements made about the vehicle. The dealer holds no responsibility for any repairs; you are responsible for all repairs.



Doing your homework before buying a vehicle can save you lots of time and money. For more information, to file a complaint, or check the complaint history of a business, call Pinellas County Consumer Protection at (727) 464-6200 or visit [Consumer Protection](#).

The Pen

Got Reward Points?

Have you thought about using your reward points for holiday gifting? There are over 12,000 items to choose from, including e-gift cards. Just log in and browse. There is even an app for both Apple and Android, so you can browse from your mobile device. When you find something you'd like, add it to your cart and the item will be shipped to your home address. E-cards can be personalized and emailed to your giftee.



If you've forgotten your password, select the Forgot Password link. Your login information will be sent to you via email. Or, you can contact the Rewards Program helpline at (800) 875-8284 Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Questions? View the [Rewards Program](#) (internal link) or contact Human Resources at (727) 464-3367, option 2 and ask for Rewards Program assistance.

Upcoming Blood Drives



Did you know that one blood donation can save up to three lives? You can donate whole blood, red blood cells, platelets or plasma. Please consider donating! Walk-ins are welcome or [schedule an appointment](#).

Solid Waste

3095 114th Ave. N., St. Petersburg
November 16, 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

STAR Center

7887 Bryan Dairy Road, Largo
November 17, 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Tax Collector (South County)

2500 34th Street North, St. Petersburg
November 16, 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Utilities

14 S. Ft. Harrison Avenue, Clearwater
November 2, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

It's Almost Time to Fall Back

Daylight Savings ends at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, November 6.
 Don't forget to set your clocks back!



Welcome Aboard

New employees listed are for September 2022.

Board of County Commissioners

Administrative Services

Toolsie Dubra..... Facility Manager 3
 Brian Dunn.....Fleet Mechanic
 Olessia JonesAdministrative Support Specialist 1
 Eva-Valentina AtwaterAdministrative Support Specialist 1

Animal Services

Elizabeth Makowski..... Animal Services Representative

Human Services

Cameron Ehmg.....Office Specialist 1
 Brian LeapleyManagement Analyst
 Kenneth Sawyer..... Case Manager 1
 Haydee Vera..... Case Manager 1

Parks and Conservation Resources

Clyde BinglerCraftworker 1
 Alyvia Crosno.....Park Ranger 1
 Jeff Moore.....Craftworker 1
 Aimee Zuniga.....Office Specialist 1

Public Works

Gabriela Hernandez.....Office Specialist 1
 Gregory Hall Maintenance 1
 Jaden Lee..... Maintenance 1
 Alexander Manos.....Environmental Specialist 2
 Francine Ocampo.....Environmental Program Manager 3
 Eric StearnsEnvironmental Specialist 1

Safety & Emergency Services

Heather Dame911 Telecommunicator, Trainee
 Daniel Gardner911 Telecommunicator, Trainee
 Jaquez Oliver911 Telecommunicator, Trainee

Utilities

James Coker Meter Reader 1
 Nathan Ippolitti Meter Reader 1
 Willie Williams..... Utilities Maintenance Specialist 3

Business Technology Solutions

Joseph Gauthier.....Program Coordinator, BTS-OTI

Forward Pinellas

Dana Santos Planning Program Specialist

Clerk of the Circuit Court

Jael BrallaRecords Specialist 1
 Carol Creutz..... Finance Operations Technician
 Joanne Dunwell.....Finance & Accounting Analyst 1
 Dawson Flinchbaugh.....Fiscal Records Specialist
 Erin GatlinRecords Specialist 1
 Sheena LishFiscal Records Specialist
 Mark MurphyRecords Specialist 1
 Wellington ReyesRecords Specialist 1

Human Resources

Breanne O’Leary..... Human Resources Specialist

Property Appraiser’s Office

David Stewart.....Valuation Analysis and Standards Appraiser

Supervisor of Elections

Hannah Barnes..... Administrative Support Specialist 1
 Arnoldo Cueller..... Administrative Support Specialist 1
 Matthew Smith Elections Administrator
 Michael Tuthill Administrative Support Specialist 1
 Jessalyn Zsiga Administrative Support Specialist 1

Tax Collector’s Office

Donald SeeEndpoint Analyst

The Pen



Promotions

Promotions listed are for September 2022.

Board of County Commissioners

Administrative Services

Jennifer Castagner Budget & Financial Mgmt. Analyst
 Ryan Mlynarski Facility Manager 3
 William Williams Electrician 2

Building and Development Review Services

Calyn Lee Development Project Manager 1

Convention and Visitors Bureau

Liz McCann Sales Representative

Office of Management and Budget

James Abernathy Management & Budget Manager
 Fredricka Collins Director 1

Parks and Conservation Resources

Robyn Humphries Administrative Support Specialist 2
 Denise Morton Park Enforcement Technician
 Michael Paulton Park Enforcement Technician
 Dan Singson Park Enforcement Technician
 Toni Steele Park Enforcement Technician

Public Works

Troy Bielicki Craftworker 1
 Gwynne Boccia Project Coordinator–Project Management
 Paul Haywood Field Operations Coordinator Sr.
 Christine Joyner Environmental Specialist 2
 Brian Kelley Construction Management Inspector 1
 Doris McHugh Administrative Support Specialist 1
 Alexander Montag Maintenance 2

Safety and Emergency Services

Amber Best 911 Public Safety Telecommunicator
 James Guerrieri 911 Public Safety Telecommunicator
 Bryanna Ward 911 Public Safety Telecommunicator

Utilities

Drew Boylson Water Quality Management Specialist 2
 Charles Jeffries Trainee Underfill A
 Shane McGahan Water Conservation Compliance Officer
 Reggie Rutledge Administrative Support Specialist 1
 Daniel Sahn Project Management Specialist 1
 Angel Warf Water Conservation Compliance Officer

Business Technology Services

Darren Johnson Network Telecom's Field Technician
 Andrew Lewis Operations Center Specialist 1
 Brent Wilson Network Telecommunications Analyst

Clerk of the Circuit Court

Justin Hansen Manager Financial Accounting
 Jacob Lunin Records Specialist
 Jasmine Schill Court Clerk 1

Human Resources

Natalie Ingham Human Resources Analyst

Forward Pinellas

Cristiane Smith Accounting Services Coordinator

Tax Collector's Office

Anthony Rupansingh Tax Technician 3

The Pen

Service Anniversaries

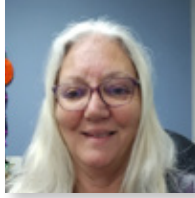
Service anniversaries listed are for September 2022.

30 YEARS

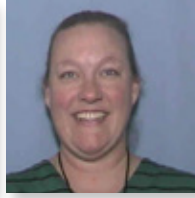


Jonathan Skinner
Parks and Conservation
Resources

25 YEARS



Michelle Marshall
Human Services



Carol Strickland
Office of Human
Rights

Unavailable for Photo

35 Years

Lisa Williams
Business Technology Services

30 Years

Mark Whitman
Utilities

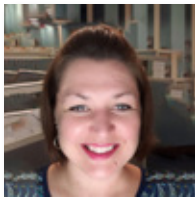
25 Years

Kimberly Newlin
Human Services

20 Years

Fernando Luis
Public Works

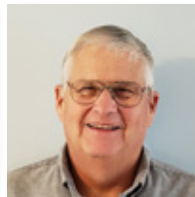
20 YEARS



Carly Roe
Tax Collector's Office



Anna Marie Fiallos
Human Services



David Hansen
Utilities

3 TO 15 YEARS

15 Years

Peter Genova..... Office of Human Rights
Vanessa Rodriguez..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
Jill Whitcomb..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
Beth Yeatman..... Clerk of the Circuit Court

10 Years

Elizabeth Bemis..... Tax Collector's Office
Amy Casamo..... Building and Dev. Review Services
Maria Cascone..... Office of Management and Budget
Lisa Eutize..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
Karen Kelley..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
Sarah Markofski..... Human Resources
Kristin Marshall..... Human Services
Misael Munoz Alers..... Utilities

5 Years

David Adams..... Utilities
Margaret Andriuli..... Tax Collector's Office
Peter Carey..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
Jarrell Carter..... Utilities
Cody Chamburs..... Utilities
Raylisha Dixon..... Tax Collector's Office
Mark Dykstra..... Tax Collector's Office
Stephen Elder..... Tax Collector's Office
Ralph Frye..... Utilities
Edward Griswold..... Communications
Joshua Jones..... Tax Collector's Office
Tracey Nix..... Convention and Visitors Bureau
Michael O'Connor..... Public Works

Jacina Parson..... County Attorney
Bryan Peterson..... Property Appraiser's Office
Jude Reazin..... Building and Dev. Review Services
Sean Rodgers..... Tax Collector's Office
Sandra Shields..... County Administration
Kevin Ware..... Public Works

3 Years

Abhimanyu Adusumilli..... Business Technology Services
Tommy Almonte..... County Administration
Edward Alston..... Parks and Conservation Resources
Lisa Carrillo..... Human Services
Brittany Christopher... Safety & Emergency Management
Kevin Collins..... Business Technology Services
Jean Corvil..... Utilities
Susan Crowley..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
Joe Garces..... Parks and Conservation Resources
Joseph Gilbert..... Property Appraiser's Office
Lori Gioia..... Property Appraiser's Office
Shaun Griffin..... Parks and Conservation Resources
Pedro Heredia..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
Shantel Higgins..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
Jason Ingle..... Administrative Services
Timothy Lewallen..... Administrative Services
Rodney Marion..... County Administration
Ryan McCabe..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
Martin Medekeri..... Business Technology Services
Laura Moore..... Tax Collector's Office
Polly Myers..... Property Appraiser's Office
Cynthia Thompson..... Parks and Conservation Resources

Retirements

Retirements listed are for September 2022.

Over 20 Years



Dixie Taylor
Administrative Support
Specialist,
Clerk of the Circuit Court

Over 16 Years



Maria Costa
Tax Technician 2,
Tax Collector's
Office

Retirees Unavailable for Photo

Over 35 Years

Susan Scholpp, Section Manager 3, Public Works

Over 34 Years

Lisa Williams, Solutions Architect, Business
Technology Services

Over 21 Years

James Daros, Park Ranger 1, Parks and
Conservation Resources

REPCO News

The next REPCO lunch meeting will be a picnic on November 14, 2022 at Walsingham Park Shelter 1. The menu will be fried chicken, baked beans and Greek salad. Ice tea, lemonade, and water will be available beverages. Attendees may bring a dessert to share if they wish to do so. The cost for attendees will be \$10 payable at the picnic. RSVP before November 7 to Rudy Garcia at rdgarcia@verizon.net or (813) 855-3466.

Retirement Planning

- See [Retiree Benefits: What Happens When I Retire?](#)
- Visit the FRS website at www.myfrs.com which includes valuable resources such as:
 - [Financial Planning Workshops](#)
 - [Retirement Checklist for Pension Plan](#)
 - [Retirement Checklist for Investment Plan](#)
 - [Comparing the Pension and Investment Plans](#)
- Call the MyFRS Financial Guidance Line at (866) 446-9377 to speak with a certified financial planner from Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., or [email](#) your question. Experts can provide a personalized retirement estimate, and answers questions on retirement planning, FRS plan options, and managing your finances.
- Sign up for a Pinellas County course on Getting Ready for Retirement or Passport to Retirement. See the [Learning Catalog](#). To enroll, log into OPUS and select PIN OLM Learner.
- Please [schedule an appointment](#) (NEW) with Benefits approximately 1 to 3 months prior to your effective date of retirement to complete paperwork such as:
 - FRS Service Retirement
 - DROP enrollment or DROP termination
 - Retiree insurance enrollment
- For questions, contact Benefits at employee.benefits@pinellascounty.org or call (727) 464-3367, **option 1**.



Blast from the Past: Pen 50th Anniversary Celebration Continues

We are celebrating the 50th anniversary of our employee newsletter. Here are some tidbits from the May 1973 issue.



MAY 1973 Memorial...The Day and The Park

As a fitting tribute to upcoming Memorial Day, the crew at War Veterans Memorial Park recently constructed a concrete slab and river-gravel walkway for the M41 Tank shown below. The 22-ton tank, which did such creditable service in World War II, has been restored to near mint-like condition, and is yet another of the many attractions gracing our pleasant County parks.

TODAY: The tank is still at [War Veterans' Memorial Park](#) and can be viewed during regular park hours. Pinellas County has also established a Battlefield Cross Monument to honor Pinellas County's fallen service members of the Gulf War Era. Families of the fallen and nearly 300 residents attended the ceremony to dedicate the Battlefield Cross Monument on Memorial Day in 2015.

The Pen



Salvatore Mazza as Jack Del Rio . . .

Show Ways to Hiways...

As Salvatore Mazza puts it, "manicuring the boulevards of Pinellas County for the Highway Division is a far cry from my old show business days, but I'm enjoying the change."

Salvatore, who for almost thirty years toured the entertainment circuit under his stage name of Jack Del Rio, literally lights up as he reminisces about his many interesting experiences in show business.

During his career he was featured as an acrobat, pantomimist, comedian and master-of-ceremonies, often sharing billing with such great names as Jimmy Durante, Jack Benny, Lionel Hampton, Cab Calloway, and the Mills Brothers.

Even though he derived great pleasure from entertaining his varied audiences, Salvatore believes that the most satisfaction he received in his show business career came from his guest appearances at hundreds of crippled children's charity hospitals throughout the United States, Europe and Africa.

One particular feat which was publicized in a Ripley "Believe It or Not" column described how Salvatore, "less than 5' tall, and weighing only 110 pounds, could pick up *with his teeth* at one time a table and 6 chairs equivalent to about 250 pounds." This earned for Salvatore the name of "Steel Jawed Wonder Boy."

Both Salvatore Mazza and Jack Del Rio are more or less retired from show business, but Salvatore is still displaying his entertainment magic to produce laughter and enjoyment among his fellow workers at Barn 1 in St. Petersburg.

TODAY: Pinellas County has over 3,100 employees who come from a myriad of different backgrounds. With that many employees, there is sure to be plenty of talent, interests, and knowledge to be shared in the community.

The Pen Extra

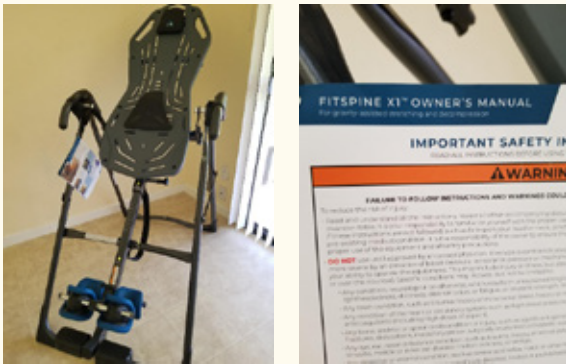
Your Source for Employee Info

Employee and family news including kudos, weddings, births, graduations, memorials, and classified ads. Send your news to employee.communications@pinellascounty.org or call (727) 464-3367.

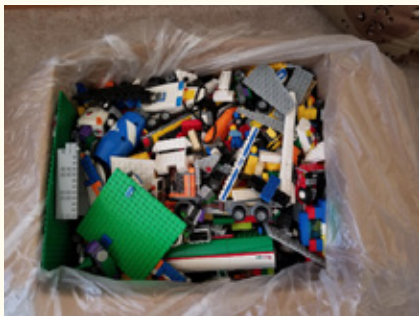
Classified Ads

The following items are offered for sale by the same seller. If interested, call or text (727) 488-3988. Cash and carry.

Teeter Fitspine X1 Inversion Table, \$199, brand new, assembled, pick-up only.

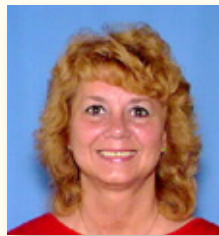


Lego assortment. Various sets. 27+ pounds worth, \$99, pick-up only.



Gone but not Forgotten

The Pen is saddened to report the passing of the following retirees:



Dorothy Brennan, 74, of Clearwater, passed away on September 9, 2022. Brennan retired in 2010 as a Court Records Specialist 2 with the Clerk of the Circuit Court after over 16 years of service with Pinellas County Government. [View her obituary.](#)



Leo Alexander, 96, of Sebring, passed away on September 29, 2022. Alexander retired in 1998 from Public Works after over 14 years of service with Pinellas County Government. [View his obituary.](#)

Congratulations

Jackie Fain (Utilities) and her husband, Matt, were married on October 1 at Philippe Park in Safety Harbor. Hurricane Ian knocked the power out at their original venue, but they were still able to pull together a wonderful ceremony with friends and family. Congratulations!

